

Growing up in Glasgow

A stunning evocation of an urban childhood
CINEMA, page 35

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SNAP VERDICT

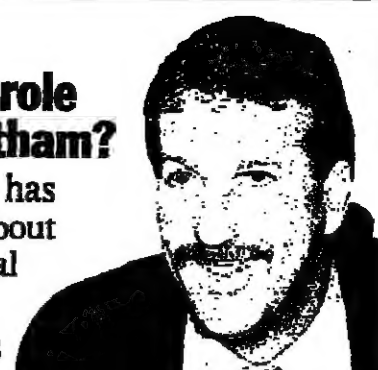
EASTER BOOKS

A.S. Byatt on Doris Lessing,
Henry Chadwick: Oxford gospel
Tania Glyde on teenage angst
Peter Stothard: sculpting Pandora
PAGES 38,39



A new role for Botham?

Alan Lee has doubts about a potential selector
PAGE 48



APPOINTMENTS

28 pages of jobs
SECTION 3

EC faces legal challenge on beef boycott

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND MICHAEL HORNSBY

MINISTERS last night attacked Britain's "unhelpful" European partners for refusing to lift the worldwide ban on beef products as the Government confirmed plans for a selective slaughter of 4.6 million older cattle.

Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, unveiled plans to provide financial help to beleaguered farmers and slaughterhouse owners, and threatened to take legal action over the "unjustified" European Union ban on British beef.

The ban is certain to stay in place for at least another month despite Britain's proposal to destroy cattle when they reach the end of their working lives. However, Mr Hogg told the Commons: "It is very, very important that we secure a lifting of the ban and I have to say that the justifications that I have heard for the imposition and the maintenance of the ban do not seem to me to have arguments which are founded on logic or science."

"As to the legality, we are looking earnestly and urgently at the legality of what has been done," he added.

Under the new measures, no cattle over the age of 30 months can be used for human or animal feed or in the manufacture of cosmetic or pharmaceutical products. This means that about 15,000 old and no longer productive cows and breeding bulls a week will have to be destroyed after slaughter.

Farmers will receive compensation of about £480 a head which will cost £390 million a year, of which the EU will pay 70 per cent. Britain will have to pay the cost of disposing of the carcasses which could be £100 million a year.

By April 30 Britain must present the EU with a plan for the compulsory slaughter and destruction of "animals and/or herds identified as being most likely to have been

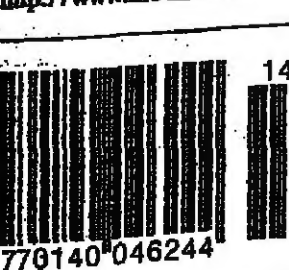
Continued on page 2, col 7



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TV & RADIO 46, 47
WEATHER 24
CROSSWORDS 24, 48



Shipping magnate George Franghitas (right) with Commander Roy Ramm. "This has been a terrifying ordeal," Mr Franghitas said. "I wondered if I would ever be freed."

Yard foils £5m kidnapping

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, DOMINIC KENNEDY, RICHARD DUCE AND BILL FROST

A GREEK shipping magnate told yesterday how he feared for his life as he was kept blindfolded and drugged in a cupboard for nine days by a gang of armed kidnappers demanding a £5 million ransom.

George Franghitas, who had been abducted close to his London home on March 24, was found after a huge police surveillance operation that led to the arrest of four men. He was described as "very disturbed, very worried, very upset and very frightened."

Mr Franghitas, 43, said: "This has been a terrifying ordeal for me and my family. I feared for my safety and wondered if I would ever be freed. I am grateful to the police for my release."

"I didn't have any sleep and I don't feel very well. It's very difficult. I am not in any position to really be able to describe things that happened to me. I am still in shock."

Mr Franghitas, a bachelor who lives alone, was kidnapped after parking his car near his home in Maida Vale at 6.20 pm. He was bundled into a car boot at gunpoint, gagged with tape and handcuffed. One of the kidnappers climbed into the boot with him before the car drove off to 5

Hogan Mews, Paddington, the three-storey rented house that was to become his prison. Once inside, he was locked in a 6 ft by 3 ft walk-in cupboard with a chair in it. His spectacles were taken from him, and he was masked and forced to wear earmuffs throughout his ordeal. He was handcuffed for the first few days and although the gag was also removed, he was given tranquillisers to keep him quiet.

From time to time he was forced to make tape recordings that were used to reinforce some fifty telephoned ransom demands to his family, who notified the police soon after Mr Franghitas disappeared.

The first call was made to his relatives in London and Greece within 36 hours of his abduction and the kidnappers are believed to have demanded up to £5 million, although no money was handed over.

Scotland Yard's organised crime group and intelligence directorate launched a massive round-the-clock surveillance operation involving more than fifty officers — many of them armed — at any one time and the arrests came late on Tuesday night as police were intercepting one of the

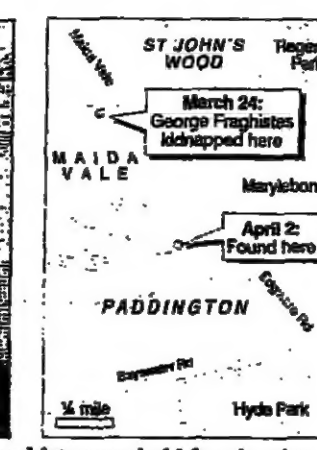


The house in which Mr Franghitas was held for nine days

kidnappers' calls to the family. Commander Roy Ramm, who led the operation, said: "We decided to arrest two suspects who were actually using the telephone while we were receiving a call at the family home. We managed to grab the phone and prove that that was a contact between the two men and the family."

Those two men were held in a street in Golders Green, another was held outside Hogan Mews and the fourth was inside the building. Commander Ramm said: "Poor Mr Franghitas was found inside. Still locked in the cupboard."

"He was in a state of shock and still is, and suffering extreme distress. He suffered



ST JOHN'S WOOD, Maida Vale, Paddington, Hyde Park

bruising and grazes to his wrists from being bound with handcuffs. He was freed by police and seen by a police forensic medical examiner. He did not require hospital treatment. The kidnappers had threatened to kill the victim. However, he does not appear to have received any other physical harm."

Commander Ramm said that two of the arrested men were French and two Greek, none of them known to Mr Franghitas. Last night two of them were being questioned in Belgravia and the others were at Paddington police station.

Commander Ramm added: "This was quite clearly a carefully orchestrated and planned incident, involving a

specifically targeted victim which was carried out by a team who had clearly been planning it for some time."

"This was a difficult and potentially dangerous inquiry which has involved teams of officers working around the clock to bring about a successful end to this kidnap situation. I am very pleased that we were able to secure Mr Franghitas's safe release, thanks to the professionalism, dedication and bravery of my officers."

Mr Franghitas, who has two sisters and a brother, comes from an old shipping family which made its fortune by negotiating the exclusive right to import crude oil from the Soviet Union to Greece during the dictatorship of 1967-74. He now controls a fleet of four tankers from his West End business, World Carrier London, but he prefers to call himself an agent rather than an owner.

His ships fly under Maltese or Panamanian flags, to the distress of his compatriots, who regard him as a "lone wolf". He is not a member of the Greek shipping committee in London and he keeps a low profile within the Greek community.

His chauffeur and bodyguard George Banks describes him as a very private person. "He is not flashy with

his wealth and he is liked by everyone who knows him."

Mr Banks said that he had not slept for ten days worrying about his employer. "As they days went by I got more worried. But I never gave up hope."

The police had called him yesterday to say that Mr Franghitas had been released and when they were reunited his boss had hugged him and kissed him on both cheeks, saying "Thank God you are here."

Mr Banks said: "He had lost weight but otherwise he seemed fine. He's with his mother and family now and I think they will probably return to Greece soon."

The £300,000 house where Mr Franghitas had been held captive had been rented last September by two men who said they were brothers who wanted to be close to an aunt who was seriously ill in hospital with cancer. The agent acting for the Nigerian property owner described them as gentle and unassuming.

Howard unveils tougher prison sentences

By RICHARD FORD, FRANCES GIBB AND ALICE THOMSON

MICHAEL HOWARD yesterday unveiled the most far-reaching sentencing reforms this century and promised tough American-style prison terms for persistent burglars and criminals convicted of repeated sexual and violent offences.

The Home Secretary's proposals put him on a collision course with the judiciary, who were astonished at the extent of his plans and issued a warning that they would cause injustice.

Lord Donaldson of Lynton, a former Master of the Rolls, said the plans would see judges forced to pass "unjust" sentences and declaring publicly that they did not agree with the penalties they were required to impose.

The pre-election tone of his White Paper brought cheers from Conservative MPs and support from the police but prison governors and penal reform groups said the prison population was likely to increase by 10,000.

Mr Howard told MPs in a Commons statement that the proposals were needed to ensure that convicted criminals would be properly punished. "The proposals are aimed at protecting the public from those who persistently commit offences which cause particular public concern — serious violent or sexual offences, drug-dealing and domestic burglary," he said.

"These proposals are tough, and they should be. They are needed to protect the public and to build a safer Britain."

The measures will form a key part of the Queen's Speech in November and Mr Howard wants them to become law

Continued on page 2, col 5

White paper details, page 8
Leading article, page 21

US commerce secretary's plane crashes in the sea off Croatia

By TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON, STACY SULLIVAN IN TUZLA AND MICHAEL EVANS

AN AIRCRAFT carrying Ron Brown, the American Commerce Secretary, and a delegation of American industrialists crashed in stormy weather off the Croatian port of Dubrovnik yesterday.

Croatian officials said last night that they had found the plane's tail as well as four bodies — three men and a woman. There were 27 people aboard, including crew. A search by helicopters and divers was continuing. A Royal Navy Sea King helicopter, based at Split, was involved in the search and rescue operation last night.

The US Air Force T43 plane, the military version of the Boeing 737, disappeared from radar screens in the morning and was later reported to be three hours overdue before officials at the White House finally confirmed that the wreckage spotted off the Adriatic coastline belonged to the American flight.

The area has suffered vicious southerly winds for the past three days with few commercial flights being



Ron Brown was flying from Tuzla to Dubrovnik



BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA, Croatia, Airport

allowed to land at the airport. It was a measure of the importance of Mr Brown as the leading black in the Democratic Party, which he chaired during the presidential campaign, that President Clinton and Vice-President Al Gore, immediately cancelled all engagements. There was no evidence of hostile action against the aircraft by any of the former warring parties in the Balkans.

The flight, en route from Tuzla to Dubrovnik where the delegation had planned top level meetings with senior members of the Croatian political and business community, went down at sea between the tiny island of Kalamota, a few miles southwest of the Adriatic port, and the inland Cilipi airport.

The Commerce Secretary had spent the day visiting US troops at bases around Tuzla and meeting local businessmen.

In August last year, three key American negotiators, led by Robert Frasure, the special envoy to the former Yugoslavia, were killed when the armoured vehicle in which they were passengers slid down a ravine near Sarajevo

and exploded.

Mr Brown had been planning to spend three days in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia, meeting American troops but ostensibly holding talks with politicians and local businessmen to land United States support to rebuilding the region after 42 months of conflict.

Mr Brown has been under investigation for fraud, and last week the investigation into his alleged financial tricks was extended to his son.

Mr Clinton, a staunch proponent of Mr Brown's aid liberalism, talked to the secretary's wife, Alma, shortly after hearing of the incident. Jesse Jackson, the civil rights activist, said he had prayed with both the President and Mrs Brown.

"Ron Brown was a faithful public servant and, if the worst has happened, we must remember that he was in his full stride, travelling across the world, connecting people," he said.

Bosnian victims, page 14

Briton killed in Angola ambush

Three aid workers, including a Briton, were shot dead in an ambush in Angola. Oxfam said last night that Chris Seward, 46, from Essex, its deputy representative in Angola, was killed when his United Nations vehicle was attacked 60 miles from the coastal town of Benguela. The nationalities of the other two workers are unknown.

Flotation threat to the Woolwich

The £3 billion stock market flotation of the Woolwich Building Society has been put in jeopardy by the sudden departure of Peter Robinson, its chief executive. The society said that it had no intention of calling in the police to investigate allegations concerning irregularities over Mr Robinson's expenses. Page 3

Neo-Nazis jailed

Five leaders of South Africa's neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement have been each sentenced to 26 years' imprisonment for their roles in a bombing campaign by the movement shortly before the first democratic elections in 1994. Page 16

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LETTERS	21	ARTS	35-37	SPORT	42-46, 48
OBITUARIES	23	CHESS & BRIDGE	44	BODY AND MIND	18
WILLIAM REES-MOGG	20	COURT & SOCIAL	22	LAW REPORT	34

Scientifically speaking, MPs sign a definite article of intent

As the Commons rose yesterday for a fortnight's Easter recess, your sketchwriter looked back over a session which, since Christmas, has looked strangely unreal. Like the Sea of Galilee, the Commons chamber has been a small place capable of working itself up without warning into surprisingly fierce storms, which subside just as fast.

The most recent, on "mad cow" disease, had all but blown itself out as MPs packed for Easter. But we are

left with a powerful memory of a weird interlude: March was the month Science invaded the chamber.

Or, rather, "the" Science. Precisely when the definite article appeared is unclear, but, by the time of his Turin statement on Monday, John Major was referring, like other MPs, to "the Science". Earlier, a group we used to call scientists had been subtly adjusted in MPs' vocabulary to "the scientists". These slight changes are significant. Science and its prac-

tioners were being unconsciously elevated by politicians from the status of a body of sometimes divergent opinion practised by people who sometimes disagree (as politics and politicians are) to the status of a single, sovereign body of agreed knowledge: "the Science", against which there was no appeal.

In truth, politicians have been looking for something bigger to hold their hand. Time and again at the dispatch box the Prime Minister has deferred to a greater



MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

authority. Time and again Tony Blair has bowed to the same superior authority: never mind what politicians thought, what did the Science think? What did the Science say? In vain did Dennis Skinner protest that scientists could advise as they pleased — and sometimes advised wrongly — but it was politi-

cians who must make the final judgment. This deference of political authority to science has two explanations. The obvious one is that scientists know more about BSE prions than MPs do; but in fact, the closer the Commons has approached that knowledge the more of a chimera it has seemed, irritatingly un-

ready to relieve politicians of their duty to make judgments.

The second explanation is less obvious but, I believe, cuts deep. Politicians have lost, or feel they have lost, moral authority. Prime ministers do not expect us to take their word for it any longer; opposition leaders know we know they have axes of their own to grind, and no longer expect their own word to be trusted: "Not my words, Madam Speaker, but those of Seac..."

Is there, we wonder, a

committee of experts to which the question of Britain joining a single European currency could soon be deferred? Can a body of academics be found to advise on NHS reforms or pensions policy?

The year started as reverberations from the report of the Nolan committee died away. Nolan was appointed because, presumably, politicians felt they lacked the perceived moral authority to set their own house in order. With the new year has come the report of Sir Richard

Scott. Appointed for the same reasons, his words have been picked through in politics like scripture. "Not my words, Madam Speaker, but..." When oil was spilt off Milford Haven, MPs, distrusting the Department of Transport, called for Lord Griffiths to tell us what went wrong.

Nolan, Scott, Griffiths, Seac, these are the saints whose miracles our national leaders now ask us to accept as speaking for an authority that no longer seems to speak for itself.

Cattle industry facing 'financial meltdown'

By MICHAEL HORNSBY, AGRICULTURE CORRESPONDENT

FARMERS, abattoir operators, livestock auctioneers and beef exporters issued a warning yesterday that the cattle industry was facing financial meltdown unless it received urgent help from the Government.

Businesses were running out of cash because they could not sell the huge stocks of beef that had piled up as a result of the ban on exports and the collapse in the market at home, industry sources said.

Sir David Naisbitt, the president of the National Farmers' Union, said: "It is essential that a proper compensation package is quickly implemented, not only for farmers but also for hauliers, cattle markets, abattoirs, exporters, retailers and other parts of the food chain." Even Cameron, president of the Country Landowners' Association and a Somerset dairy farmer, said: "I cannot stress enough the gravity of the situation with a

whole range of firms unable to survive for many more days. Yet it seems there is no prospect of the export ban being lifted for at least six weeks."

Brian Montgomery, head of agriculture at the National Westminster Bank, said: "Farmers are probably under the least immediate pressure. But the paralysis of the beef industry is starting to hit abattoirs, exporters, processors and exporters severely."

Farmers can hope for some relief from the EU-backed plan to dispose of old cows and breeding bulls which cannot now go into the food chain. About £180 a head will be paid to farmers for these animals; about the same as they would have fetched if still being used for food.

The difficulty facing the Ministry of Agriculture is that about 15,000 old cattle go for slaughter every week. Britain's nine licensed livestock

incinerators cannot handle more than about 3,000 carcasses a week. One idea being looked at is to have the carcasses turned into meat and bone meal by renderers and then used as fuel in power stations. Chicken litter is already used in some stations.

Farmers said they were extremely worried the Government might be forced to destroy large numbers of younger animals in herds with a past history of BSE to get the export ban lifted. This could wipe out half the nation's dairy herd. Sir David said: "We see no evidence that such a move would greatly reduce the incidence of BSE."

The Federation of Freshmeat Wholesalers said that up to half the 6,500 cattle slaughtermen had been laid off.

The Meat and Livestock Commission estimates that 31,500 tonnes of beef, worth £79 million, is currently in

stores abroad, in abattoir chiller rooms and in bonded warehouses at ports, or is stuck on ships at sea, because it cannot now be sold.

Jim Watson, head auctioneer at Banbury in Oxfordshire, Europe's biggest cattle market, said: "We sold only about 200 cattle today whereas at this time of year we would normally expect a daily sale of 1,000 or more." Mr Watson said the Ministry of Agriculture had made matters worse by using dental development as the criterion for defining cattle over 30 months old.

"The ministry order says that any animal with two fully grown incisor teeth cannot be slaughtered for food," he said. "This means that prime steers and heifers as young as 20 months, with no risk of BSE infection at all, are being turned away. It is crazy."

Paul Heiney, page 20
Letters, page 21



Douglas Hogg after the EU meeting yesterday

Cull plan

Continued from page 1 exposed to BSE-infected meat and bone meal. No details have been finalised of how herds would be identified or how many animals likely to be involved but some member states want Britain to cull all herds with even one case of BSE. That would wipe out 54 per cent of dairy herds and 15 per cent of beef herds.

Mr Hogg said abattoirs with cash-flow problems would have inspection charges waived and that banks would face government pressure to underwrite the costs to slaughterhouses of taking on new business.

The refusal of the European Union to lift the worldwide ban on British beef exports worth nearly £600 million a year is a stunning political rebuff and Tory backbenchers turned their fire on European farm ministers.

Sir Teddy Taylor, the Euro-sceptic Tory MP, said that Britain had been "humiliated" and called for Britain to deduct the cost of the cattle cull from its EU contributions.

Sir Geoffrey Johnson Smith, a former Tory minister, told Mr Hogg that there was "a growing loss of confidence in the integrity of the ministers from the EU with whom you are trying to negotiate."

Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, leapt to the defence of Mr Hogg, who was criticised for leaving the European talks without securing a promise that the ban would be lifted.

He dismissed as "a total misrepresentation" the suggestion that fellow ministers were dissatisfied with the way Mr Hogg had dealt with the beef crisis.

Paul Heiney, page 20
Letters, page 21
Photograph, page 24

Teachers call for sacking of chief inspector

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION EDITOR

THE most moderate of the big teaching unions issued a near-unanimous demand yesterday for the Government's school inspection system to be scrapped. Only one of 600 delegates to the annual conference of the Association of Teachers and Lecturers (ATL) opposed a call for the Office for Standards in Education to be disbanded.

A motion claimed that inspection was being used as a "political weapon". Opposition to the inspection system, which has now failed 150 schools, has been growing throughout the teaching profession. The National Union of Teachers will consider withdrawing cooperation at the weekend and the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers is expected to call next week for the resignation of Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector.

A succession of delegates at the ATL's conference in Torquay accused Mr Woodhead of political bias and condemned the privatised inspection process as wasteful and inaccurate. Robin Squire, the Schools Minister, drew boos of derision when he insisted that Ofsted was independent and politically neutral.

Peter Smith, the ATL's general secretary, said teachers wanted a more constructive inspection regime operated by more professional teams. "I cannot envisage Ofsted earning the professional credibility and confidence it needs if Mr Woodhead remains as Chief Inspector, unless he is prepared to listen to the criticisms that are being made and take them seriously," he said.

Mr Woodhead's outspoken criticism of teaching standards, and especially his estimate that 15,000 teachers are incompetent, have made him uniquely unpopular in the profession.

But the Chief Inspector said he was surprised that Mr Smith had sought to personalise the debate. "I shall continue to do all I can to ensure that education standards in this country rise in the way they are doing and must," Mr Woodhead said.

Rigorous external inspection of the kind provided by Ofsted was vitally important if progress in schools was to be maintained.

Schools to miss league

UP TO 1,000 small primary schools may be omitted from the first league tables of 11-year-olds' test results, Robin Squire, the Schools Minister, told a teachers' union conference yesterday (John O'Leary writes).

The tables to be published next year, have been condemned by teachers' leaders as misleading. Ministers hope that by removing schools that have fewer than ten pupils sitting next term's tests, they will blunt some of the criticism.

Mr Squire told the Association of Teachers and Lecturers' conference at Torquay that the fluctuations in small schools' results might be too great to provide meaningful comparisons.

Health experts play down risk of human infection

FROM PETER CAPELLA
IN GENEVA

THERE is little risk of human contamination from bovine spongiform encephalopathy if current safety procedures are carried out, the World Health Organisation said yesterday. Its verdict is based on an exhaustive study of worldwide scientific evidence.

A two-day meeting in Geneva of experts from seven countries issued a strengthened set of recommenda-

tions to prevent BSE-infected tissue, and meat from any animal infected with similar diseases, from reaching the food chain. They said that in addition to the slaughter and safe disposal of animals showing signs of infection, safe rendering procedures for all cattle were essential. There should be a ban on ruminant tissue used in feed for cows, sheep and other ruminants, the experts added.

The WHO added that milk products were safe, even in countries with a high incidence of BSE. Dr Joseph

Losos, the director-general of health protection at the Canadian laboratory for disease control, said there was enough evidence from all BSE-type diseases to show that milk would not transmit them. Gelatine was also considered to be safe. "The manufacturing process has been demonstrated to significantly inactivate any residual infective activity that may have been present in source tissues," the scientists said that there was an urgent need for more research into the ten newer forms of Creutz-

feld-Jakob disease uncovered in Britain, although there was still no proven link with exposure to the BSE agent. "The geographic distribution of this new variant, although reported at present only in the United Kingdom, needs to be better defined," Dr Losos said.

CJD remained a rare disease, the experts said. The rate of infection, about one per million, was constant in all countries, including Britain.

The American Government is planning to close a regulatory loop-

hole that has left some dietary supplements and cosmetics at risk of containing ingredients from BSE-infected cattle. The makers, unlike pharmaceutical manufacturers and food producers, are not barred from importing beef from countries known to have infected herds.

The Food and Drug Administration in Washington said new regulations were being considered because the industry's response to repeated demands for voluntary compliance had been unsatisfactory.

Howard

Continued from page 1 before next April, in time for the general election. If the poll is called before then, the proposals will be a main plank of the Conservative manifesto.

The key changes are automatic life sentences for offenders who repeat serious violent or sexual crimes, minimum seven-year jail terms for those convicted for a third time of dealing in Class A drugs and minimum three-year sentences for defendants found guilty of burglary three times.

The Government accepts a huge prison building programme will be needed, at an estimated cost to the taxpayer of £3 billion over 25 years.

Labour, which is anxious not to be wrongfooted on law and order before a general election, gave a cautious welcome to the changes. Jack Straw, the Shadow Home Secretary, said Labour supported the principle of honesty in sentencing and the idea of indeterminate sentences for rapists and other serious offenders. He was not opposed to minimum sentences.

With Lord Taylor of Gosforth, the Lord Chief Justice, maintaining a silence on the White Paper, the judicial assault was led by Lord Donaldson. He said he was "shaken" by the proposal that the automatic life sentence, to be imposed for a second violent offence, would "actually mean life". It would increase the risk of more murders. "It will be like a murder sentence so that the offender is permanently on licence," he said.

He described as "breathtaking" the White Paper's stipulation that judges would be able to avoid passing an automatic life sentence only in "genuinely exceptional cases".

Mr Howard's proposal to take account of previous convictions stretching back years when deciding a defendant's eligibility for an automatic life sentence was "wholly unreasonable," he said.

"It is not retrospective legislation. But it will lead to injustice. If you take grievous bodily harm with intent — the intent can be quite small. The person may as a juvenile have been involved in a pub brawl and go over the top. They may then be provoked — and find himself in for life."

White paper details, page 8
Leading article, page 21

Strategy changed after Panther case

By LIN JENKINS

THE successful end to the operation against the kidnappers of George Fraghistas is tribute to the police's largely successful strategy for dealing with a rare but complex crime.

By putting the life of the victim above the arrest of the kidnappers Commander Roy Ramo and his team were following the advice of confidential guidelines on the handling of kidnappers cases.

The guide, compiled by the Association of Chief Police Officers, was drawn up after the grim experiences of the Seventies when police faced heavy criticism for the loss of life in two cases.

The need for such a manual underlines the rarity of kidnappers cases. Few senior officers ever investigate a kidnapping.

The most recent case was last year when John Warrington demanded £50,000 for the release of Margaret Smith, wife of a St Albans businessman. She was freed when a milkman heard her cries from the tiny room where she was held captive for five days. Warrington was jailed for 15 years.

The advice on negotiation techniques, surveillance and instigating news blackouts is currently being incorporated into a new handbook dealing with rare major crime such as serial killings and multiple rapes as well as kidnapping.

It is being written after a year-long study by a group headed by Detective Chief Superintendent Michael Jenkins of the West Midlands Police.

In kidnapping cases it is considered vital to establish quickly a sympathetic relationship with the victim's relatives and to coach them on how to talk to the kidnapper. After the death of Leslie Whittle in 1975 at the hands of Donald Neilson, known as the Black Panther, Scotland Yard introduced a policy of taking press into police confidence in exchange for a police blackout of details of a kidnapper case until its conclusion.

It was thought that details appearing in the press could have contributed to Miss Whittle's fate. The 17-year-old daughter of a wealthy busi-

nessman died three days after being tied by the neck in a drainage shaft. Her body was not found for seven weeks.

Another case which helped to shape procedures was so limited that they were forced to turn to the FBI for help when Muriel McKay, the 56-year-old wife of the deputy chairman of the *New of the World*, was kidnapped. A ransom of £1 million was



Leslie Whittle: killed by Donald Neilson

demand but not collected. Two men were jailed for the kidnapping but Mrs McKay's body was never found.

Scotland Yard said yesterday that in the Fraghistas case it had been decided not to brief the press. "It is at the discretion of the officer in the case whether to or not. As a rule of thumb we normally wait until there is a press query and in this case there was not," a spokesman said.

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Shock at the golf club and murmurs in the City as £3bn deal is threatened

High price of row over boss who is no longer with the Woolwich

By PATRICIA TEHAN AND ROBERT MILLER

THE £3 billion stock market flotation of the Woolwich Building Society has been put in jeopardy by the sudden departure of Peter Robinson, its chief executive, amid allegations of the abuse of company facilities.

Sir Brian Jenkins, the chairman, and Donald Kirkham, the former chief executive who will step in to fill Mr Robinson's shoes until a replacement is found, met yesterday to discuss how to handle the crisis, preserve the society's reputation and limit the extent of the damage.

The Woolwich said yesterday that it had no intention of calling in the police to investigate allegations concerning irregularities over expenses. A spokesman added that the Woolwich's concerns were over the alleged "irregular use" of expenses and facilities.

The allegations, flatly denied by Mr Robinson, are understood to concern the use of company gardeners, electricians and decorators for work on his home over a longer period of time than the three months initially suggested.

In a statement issued by his solicitor, Mr Robinson said he was "totally shocked" by what had happened. "The first I heard from the board was on Monday afternoon. This was after 33 years of unblemished service with the Woolwich, of which I am very proud, and culminating in my appointment as chief executive only three months ago. I deny that I have in any way misused the

society's facilities and the matter is now in the hands of my solicitor."

A statement from the Woolwich said: "Mr Robinson is entitled to his views. But our action was based on an irreparable loss of confidence of our board and management."

City corporate financiers and analysts said the dramatic departure of the man who had been chief executive for only three months, and chief executive designate for eight years, could severely damage the flotation plans. If the flotation goes ahead, about three million qualifying savers and 550,000 qualifying borrowers would receive an estimated average of around £1,000 each in a free share distribution next year.

Predators were said to be circling the society yesterday, although Sir Brian said the Woolwich had received no approaches. Martin Hughes, banking analyst with Credit Lyonnais Laing, said: "I fully expect money to be put on the table by possible buyers. The strategy of any business has been built over many years. If someone has been instrumental in that over many years, you cannot throw someone new in and expect them to be the same." At the very least, he said, it would affect the valuation of the society by the stock market.

Speculation yesterday centred on banks such as HSBC, Midland's parent, Abbey National, the Prudential, the Halifax and Alliance &

Leicester. Mr Robinson's home was empty after his wife Janice packed two suitcases and left last night with a family friend and their two golden retrievers.

Also officially "on holiday" was Mr Robinson's multi-millionaire brother Alan, who sold his estate-agent business to the Halifax for a reported £20 million during the property boom of the late Eighties. At home in Chislehurst, south-east London, Peter Robinson's student nephew Steve, aged 20, said: "Peter is one of the nicest blokes I know, and always great fun. I've heard claims he was arrogant and should go to charm school but that is not the uncle I know."

"In our family, money is never mentioned. No one is tight with their cash. The conversation around the dinner table is about football and birds. My favourite thing to do was play a round of golf with him. He plays off 12 handicap. I'm 18, and the matches are pretty competitive."

Mr Robinson's departure met with disbelief at the West Kent Golf Club in Orpington, where he has been a stalwart member for more than 20 years and is regarded as an accomplished after-dinner speaker.

Paul Stevens, the club secretary, said: "Everybody was shocked by the announcement. One feels very sorry for him. He is a very outgoing, extrovert character; a very confident man. He is still very much welcome here."



Aerial view of the Robinsons' mock Tudor home and carefully tended gardens

House-proud couple who give their home a little extra help

By ADRIAN LEE

THE Robinsons clearly take great pride in their house and garden. Barely a year has passed without Peter and Janice making some alteration to the property in Brasted, Kent, say locals.

Mr Robinson left his post as chief executive of the Woolwich amid allegations that he used company-paid contractors for improvements to his home and garden. The contractors are thought to work at a Woolwich training centre near Chislehurst, southeast London. Yesterday, security guards at the centre ordered reporters off the premises.

Mr Robinson's mock Tudor house would not look out of place on the cover of a glossy country living magazine. The couple set up home there in 1983, quickly adding a 20ft

swimming pool. A hard tennis court was next, then a conservatory, and finally a hacienda-style gymnasium with mirrored walls.

But it is the extensive grounds that catch the eye. At the front, banks of heather and dwarf conifers are hidden from a country lane by a neat laurel and conifer hedge. Wooden tubs of primulas and ivy welcome visitors to the main door.

Neighbours said Mr Robinson bought extra land for the all-weather tennis court behind the house and was a regular player, summer and winter, with his two daughters. The court is surrounded by tall conifers at the end of a lawn smooth enough for Mr Robinson to practise his putting. Rockeries have been

cut into the grass, box hedging encloses the pool, and on a table in the conservatory one of the volumes is *The Window Box Book*. A crazy-paving patio is dotted with terracotta pots brimming with flowers.

"The lawn is perfect," said Joe Harbert, a neighbour of 13 years who has watched the Robinson home take shape. "Mr Robinson and his wife are out there on the lawnmowers twice a week. They seem to have two or three that you sit on."

"He even feeds the lawn in winter. He has transformed this place. It used to belong to an elderly gentleman and had become a bit overgrown. But one thing I have noticed is that they don't plant any flowers in the garden - it is all shrubs."



Peter Robinson, third from left, with his three brothers at a golf club dinner

Hendrix lover claims victory

By OLIVER AUGUST

A GIRLFRIEND of Jimi Hendrix claimed victory yesterday over another of the rock star's lovers who was found guilty of contempt at the High Court.

Kathy Etchingham, now a doctor's wife and mother of two sons, said her battle with Monika Danneman, a German, was finally over.

Miss Etchingham, 50, who had a 30-month relationship with the American guitarist, was awarded costs, ending a 25-year dispute over the circumstances of Hendrix's death in 1970.

But Mr Justice French declined to jail Miss Danneman, in whose flat Hendrix died, or make her pay damages. The court was told she was in bad health and recently had to sell her paintings of Hendrix to support herself.

Miss Danneman was found to be in contempt because in her book on the guitarist, published last year, she had breached an earlier undertak-

ing not to call Miss Etchingham an "inveterate liar".

Speaking outside the court, Miss Etchingham said she was delighted with the result.

"Monika Danneman was always trying to show that she was engaged to Jimmy while I was going out with him. They were only together the last three days of his life."

Miss Etchingham has always claimed that Hendrix had become immersed in sex and drugs and was extremely unhappy in 1970. But Miss Danneman remembers Hendrix's last few months as happy. She claims they got engaged and that Miss Etchingham was trying to steal Hendrix from her.

Mr Justice French agreed with Miss Etchingham that the allegations made in the book were similar to statements made by Miss Danneman in the 1970s and published in 1991 which she had undertaken not to repeat.

Doctor must pay £825,000 over advice against measles vaccine

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

A DOCTOR who advised the parents of a five-year-old girl against a measles vaccination was ordered to pay £825,000 damages yesterday after the girl suffered brain damage caused by the disease.

Emma Thomson, who is now 14, contracted measles after the advice was given and suffered the rare complication of encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). She has personality and behavioural problems and will never be able to lead a normal life.

The judgment is likely to cause confusion among doctors faced with advising patients about the risk of vaccinations. One medical expert said last night that it reinforced the case for a no-fault system of compensation.

"If the doctor had recommended vaccination and the child had suffered brain damage, the court might still have given her £825,000. We have a system that requires judges to bend the rules to ensure

someone with whom they have sympathy receives compensation," he said.

Dr Blake James, a GP, advised Emma's parents, Terence and Ann Thomson, of Farnham, Surrey, that because their daughter had a history of convulsions it would be better not to vaccinate her. But a High Court judge said yesterday that Dr James should have told the Thomsons that Emma could have been vaccinated if special precautions were taken under Department of Health guidelines.

Mr Justice Gage said: "The advice given was causative of the damage sustained by Emma. She will never be able to work or live a normal life. The result of measles encephalitis has been catastrophic."

After taking a year to recover from the illness, Emma was left with speech impediments, autistic behaviour patterns and is unable to read because of severe learning difficulties.

Official Health Department advice in 1987, when Emma was considered for vaccination, was that children with a history of convulsions could be given the vaccine safely if it was taken with another drug, dilute human normal immunoglobulin.

However, since the triple measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine was introduced in 1988, that advice has been withdrawn because it stops the rubella and mumps elements from working.

The Department of Health said last night that it had received 548 reports of adverse reactions after the national vaccination campaign against measles in the autumn of 1994 in which 6.5 million children received the MMR vaccine. Most were minor rashes or fevers but at least 80 had "acute allergic reactions" or delayed reactions leading to fits or other problems. A spokesman said that no writs for damages caused by the

vaccine had been received.

Mr Justice Gage said that Dr James had had a duty of care to give full information to the parents about the vaccination and ways of reducing the risk. They could then have consulted a paediatrician. "Given the state of medical knowledge at that time I think a paediatrician would have advised it could have been done."

The court was told that anxiety about whooping cough vaccine in the 1970s had "spilt over" in the public mind to measles vaccinations. This had led many parents to be reluctant to let their children be vaccinated.

Two other doctors who also failed to vaccinate the child were cleared of any blame because the judge said Mrs Thomson's subsequent reluctance over measles vaccinations was caused by her first consultation with Dr James.

Body and Mind, page 18

Bishop prays for peaceful Easter in divided parish

By RUTH GLESHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

AN ANGLICAN clergyman threatened yesterday to take legal action against a parishioner in a feud over accusations that he mishandled church finances.

The Rev Robert Dixon said he has been reduced to tears and had tendered his resignation as priest-in-charge of Holy Trinity, Southwick, in the Durham diocese after clashing with a church warden, Kathleen Wilson, a magistrate. He said the parish refused to accept his resignation.

The Bishop of Durham, the Right Rev Michael Turnbull, said the dispute was a "corrosive influence" on the parish, and appealed to the both parties to use the spirit

of Easter to put their differences behind them. Mr Dixon claims his congregation has fallen by half in the past two years because of Miss Wilson's complaints. The problems began when Miss Wilson suggested to the parochial church council three years ago that the vicar was mishandling the parish's financial affairs.

Worshippers still talk of how their priest was left sobbing in the aisle when he was shunned by Miss Wilson after offering her the hand of peace on Christmas Day. Some were so appalled by the painful sight that they burst into tears of sympathy.

To quash the rumours, Mr Dixon, 45, requested an audit by the Bishop of Durham's office which failed to substantiate the

allegations. He has now asked his solicitor to advise him of action he can take against Miss Wilson.

He said: "Things were fine until I was in hospital with food poisoning and Miss Wilson publicly aired some very serious questions over my professional capability and my honesty. For a clergyman that is the worst kind of accusation and people started to treat me differently as a result. There was a feeling that there was no smoke without fire and I wasn't being given the chance to explain. Attendances at church had been going up but after this bombshell they sank by half and have stayed there. It is very depressing. Bishop Turnbull came to a public meeting attended by a hundred parishioners and told them he could find no

wrongdoing." He is considering a court injunction to stop further rumours being spread.

"The most miserable time was two Christmases ago," he said. "I was walking around the congregation shaking hands and wishing them a happy Christmas. I said: 'God bless you Kathy, happy Christmas.' She got up and walked to the other side of the church. I just burst into tears. It was a terrible moment and ruined a special day for me. Yet every Sunday she is in church without fail. Maybe it would be better if she went to another church but clearly she doesn't want to."

Miss Wilson, of Silksworth, Tyne and Wear, said: "I attend Holy Trinity every week but I have nothing to say about Mr Dixon."



Dixon: Christmas handshake was spurned by Miss Wilson

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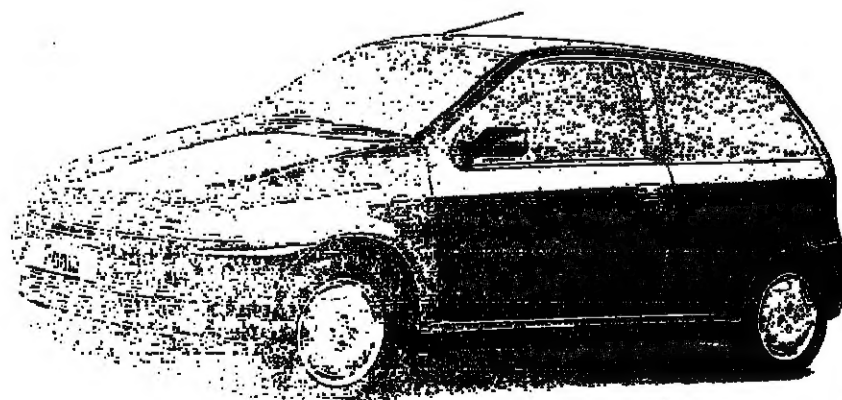
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Retired couple on 13-year voyage are held captive after yacht is boarded by Eritreans

Round-the-world pair arrested in Red Sea spy row

By Stephen Farrell

A BRITISH couple appealed for help yesterday after the Eritrean navy interrupted their 13-year circumnavigation of the globe by boarding their yacht and putting them under house arrest.

Peter Billing, 64, and his wife Shirley, 61, have been held prisoner for 10 days. The Eritreans claim their 35ft ketch *Cypres* strayed into a restricted zone near the Harnish islands in the Red Sea, which are the subject of a territorial dispute with Yemen. A naval patrol vessel

boarded the twin-masted boat as it lay at anchor two days out of Aden, and forced the couple, from Wokingham, Berkshire, to a desert military camp. They were interrogated then flown to the capital, Asmara, with a French couple arrested in the same circumstances. They are now being kept in an hotel, but are not allowed to leave their room and cannot make outgoing calls.

The Billings, who are experienced navigators, insist that they consulted other yachtsmen before passing through

the area and were given no warnings when they left Aden. Mrs Billing said yesterday that they were woken by armed men who forced them to sail through dangerous shallow waters in the dark, then took their passports, charts and cameras.

She and her husband, an electronics engineer, were forced into a mice-infested hut at gunpoint and left alone for hours. "We were in fear of our lives for the first three days. We just had no idea what was going on and were not allowed to speak to anyone," she said.

"They seemed to think we were spies, which is ridiculous. We are grandparents and so are the French couple."

"The problem seems to be that it is difficult to explain to people who have been at war for 30 years that you have enough leisure time to go off and cruise around the world on your own. They just do not understand it and they probably think we are mad."

The couple set off around the world on March 19, 1983, after selling their home. Their voyage has taken them via the Mediterranean to the Caribbe-



Peter and Shirley Billing, who are both in their 60s, were interrogated in a desert camp on suspicion of spying

an, the Galapagos Islands, the South Pacific, South-East Asia, Oman and Yemen. They spent four years in Taiwan and Singapore where Mr Billing worked for the engineering firm of which he was formerly a director.

On Sunday, after nearly a fortnight in captivity, they were allowed access to the honorary British consul, whom they criticised for being "nice, but not very aggres-

sive". "He thinks it's better to play the thing quietly, but the softly, softly approach has gone on long enough," Mrs Billing said.

Habtom Gebremichael, Consul-General at the Eritrean Consulate in London, said last night: "It will be sorted out. I gather they are about to be released. This should have taken place on Tuesday, but it has not yet."

The Foreign Office con-

firmed last night that the Eritreans were initially reluctant to grant access, but allowed the honorary consul to visit after officials in Addis Ababa "underlined our concerns" by letter. "The consul reports they are in good spirits and we understand there is a likelihood they may be released very shortly," a spokesman said last night.

The couple's three children did not hear of their plight

until Friday. Their daughter, Andrea Lowther-Harris, 33, said she feared the worst until she managed to talk to them by telephone at the weekend.

"They are bored silly, but I'm sure they will cope all right. Knowing them, Dad will have mended all the mobile phones and Mum will have taught them all synchronised swimming and how to teach English as a foreign language."

Operation on boy who died 'was not needed'

By Stephen Farrell

A BOY aged 23 months who was shuttled around four hospitals in one day died after unnecessary surgery, an inquest was told yesterday. A pathologist said that a post-mortem examination revealed no evidence that Robert Benton, who died at a Birmingham hospital last summer, suffered from a congenital chest problem.

Surgeons operated after suspecting that an object was blocking his airway. They then claimed to have discovered evidence of tracheobronchial malacia, an underdevelopment of cartilage that causes the windpipe to collapse.

But Dr David Rushton, a paediatric pathologist, told the Birmingham inquest that Robert, of Rowley Regis, West Midlands, died from a collapse of the lungs after acute bronchial infection. "I am confident this child had a major respiratory tract infection. A mistake was made in entertaining the diagnosis of tracheobronchial malacia. The effects of treatment contributed materially to the death."

Joseph Khalil-Marzouk, the consultant who operated, said the congenital condition would not necessarily show in a post-mortem examination and that Robert would have died without surgery.

The inquest was adjourned until today.

Privately owned NHS hospital given go-ahead

By Jeremy Laurence, Health Correspondent

THE building of the first privately owned NHS hospital was approved by ministers yesterday as a government health adviser gave a warning that it heralded a battle between bankers and doctors for control of the health service.

Professor Chris Ham, head of healthcare management at Birmingham University and an adviser to Stephen Dorrell, the Health Secretary, said plans by a private consortium to build a 700-bed NHS hospital in Norwich, costing £170 million, would pit shareholders' interests against patients and had "not been thought through" by the Government.

The hospital, to be built south of the city, is the largest privately financed venture approved in the NHS. It was being described by ministers yesterday as an example of the success of the private-funding strategy, which was

launched in 1992 but has found few takers.

Octagon Healthcare, a consortium of John Laing Construction and General Healthcare, will build and pay for the hospital, then lease it to the NHS on a 60-year contract, with a review after 30 years. Agreement in principle has been reached. Contracts are due to be signed by June.

John Horgan, a junior Health Minister, who also announced a £90 million project to rebuild the Princess Margaret Hospital in Swindon, refused to disclose the terms of either deal, but insisted that they were good value for money when account was taken of the "transfer of risk" from the public to the private sector.

Mr Horgan said the Norfolk and Norwich NHS Trust would run the new hospital without interference from Octagon, but Professor Ham said that was unrealistic.

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Mothers win legal fight over beach filth

By A Staff Reporter

TWO mothers won a High Court battle yesterday in their attempt to force a clean-up of the sewage-polluted beach that is their children's "park and playground".

Mr Justice Carnwath ruled that their local council must reconsider its refusal to issue an order against South West Water, requiring it to clean up their local beach.

Rachel Shelley, 21, and Sara Delaney, 29, from Porthtowan in north Cornwall, had accused Carrick District Council of unlawfully deciding last June that it would be "inappropriate" to serve an abatement notice on the water company, which is responsible for sewage disposal.

David Pannick, QC, their counsel, had argued that the authority was failing to exercise its responsibilities under the 1990 Environmental Protection Act for protecting the local community.

The surfing beach was popular with local people and holidaymakers. All year round it was park and playground to Ms Shelley's 18-month-old son Petroc and Ms Delaney's 15-month-old son Kai, the QC said.

The judge said that the council "had failed to deal with the critical issue" of whether a health risk or public nuisance was being caused by condoms and other sewage debris being washed ashore.

Judge refuses to issue guidelines for BMA

Baby who never smiled will be allowed to die

By Dominic Kennedy
Social Affairs
Correspondent

A BABY is having her life-support machine switched off to end what a judge called "almost living death". The three-month-old child survived meningitis but was left with severe brain damage. She has never smiled and doctors doubt that she ever could.

The baby, who was referred to only as C, cannot see or hear properly, move independently or communicate. Her only possible pleasure is having her forehead stroked.

Sir Stephen Brown, England's most senior family judge, was told she could be expected to live no more than two years, during which her condition would deteriorate, causing further pain and distress. She is neither brain dead nor in a coma.

But Sir Stephen, President of the High Court Family Division, resisted pressure from doctors to issue guidelines which could have led to the widespread euthanasia of brain-damaged children.

After hearing two hours of evidence and the views of four specialists and examining ultrasound brain scans, he said that each case must be judged on its merits. The judge consented to the withdrawal of



Sir Stephen: described condition as living death

treatment from the baby, whom he made a ward of court last month when a health trust asked for permission to let her die.

Her parents agree with doctors that her ventilator should be switched off. After the hearing they returned to a hospital in the North of England to prepare for their child's death.

Sir Stephen said: "It is a very extreme case indeed. The future is frankly quite hopeless, which is a terrible thing to have to say. There is no prospect of amelioration of her condition. There is no prospect of recovery. It is, of course, almost living death. It is quite

clear that this little baby does not have what can really be described as an independent existence."

The British Medical Association wanted the judge to provide guidelines for hospitals treating other hospitals so that they would know whether they should be referred to the courts before patients were allowed to die. A leading consultant paediatric neurologist gave evidence that there were many children in a similar position to Baby C.

She was born eight weeks prematurely on January 2. Within a fortnight of her birth she developed a form of meningitis which left her seriously disabled.

Baby C suffers many convulsions every day and is given three drugs to treat them. She seems distressed by noise, such as the vacuum cleaning of her special-care baby ward. Although her eyes work, the parts of her brain which interpret their signals are damaged.

She suffers discomfort from a feeding tube pushed through her nostril to the back of her throat and stomach, and a breathing tube into her windpipe. She is developing hydrocephalus, which causes headaches and requires daily insertion of needles in her brain to drain fluid. If she lived, she would need three

operations. Doctors are proposing to inject her with morphine to relieve pain and induce a coma. She will be removed from the ventilator and her parents invited to join her in a private room until she dies, which should be within two hours. All the nurses in the baby unit support the withdrawal of treatment.

Sir Stephen said that the parents had faced the situation bravely. Their solicitor said: "They are relieved that the decision has now been made. They have had to sit through two hours of a court hearing, listening to doctors describe how badly disabled and damaged their little baby is. That has been a harrowing experience for them."

Up to 1,000 cases involving babies born with severe problems arise each year. Doctors were disappointed that Sir Stephen had failed to give them guidelines on when to refer such cases to court. Medical staff are afraid that they could be accused of murder or manslaughter if they let patients die.

Dr Fleur Fisher, head of ethics for the BMA, said doctors needed a framework for such cases "where the burden of treatment is as distressing as the condition itself and where that treatment is to no other avail than to keep the child alive".



Barry Manilow with the mask he signed on the nose for the Prince's Trust

Prince has a nose for a good envoy

By Joe Joseph

PEPSI rolled out Concorde for its relaunch. Yesterday the Prince of Wales went one better and rolled out Barry Manilow.

The world's favourite drop-nosed singer yesterday joined Gary Lineker, Phil Collins, Pierce Brosnan and Dame Diana Rigg in becoming a celebrity ambassador for the Prince's Trust, which tries to give young, disadvantaged people a leg-up in life.

Manilow, who will become the trust's American-based ambassador — appeared to think that he had perhaps been sort of knighted. "This is a great honour and a great thrill for me," he said, staring at an unfamiliar audience of mostly young men, none of whom was fainting or hurling their underwear at him. "This is the first time I have been involved in anything remotely royal."

"You know, guys, the double whammy is that I really believe in this. Out of all the organisations I have been asked to get involved in, the Prince's Trust really speaks to me."

He said that his own childhood was, materially, as disadvantaged as they come. He

grew up in a sixth-floor walk-up in Brooklyn. "If you look up the word *slum* in a dictionary, you'll see my neighbourhood."

"What we did have 50 years ago was a family structure. I look back and I remember having very little, but I remember a very secure background. I think that if you give children a sense that they will be loved, no matter what they'll get out of it, a neighbourhood and prosper."

Trust ambassadors are expected to attend functions, give performances, visit young people or lend their name to this or that project. Manilow has already agreed to donate proceeds from the penultimate Wembley concert of his present British tour to the trust. He also handed over yesterday a clay mask he had decorated, one of a thousand masks that the Prince of Wales asked artists and celebrities across the world to paint the masks will be auctioned at Sotheby's in November to raise funds.

"I made a mask and I signed it on the nose," he said. "How appropriate, eh?" Even the hard-bitten photographers present melted.

Bootlegger cheated Customs of £7.7m duty

By A Staff Reporter

A MAN who masterminded a cross-Channel bootlegging operation was found guilty yesterday of defrauding Customs and Excise of £7.7 million in VAT and duty.

Ellis Martin, 37, sold 27 lorry-loads of duty-free extra-strong lager directly to shopkeepers when it should have been held in a bonded warehouse for export. He later shipped 230 lorry-loads of beer to Calais, where he had set up a front company, then re-exported it to Britain and sold it to shops, including cash-and-carries. Each time he charged the shopkeepers VAT and the 100 per cent duty payable on extra-strong beers.

Martin, a father of two from Southgate, north London, made so much money that he paid cash for a £270,000 home and two Mercedes convertibles and set up a property company to launder the rest.

Southwark Crown Court convicted him of five charges of cheating Customs out of £7.75 million in duty and VAT between November 1993 and June 1994. James White, 49, of High Halstow, Kent, managing director of a bonded warehouse, was found guilty of two charges of evading duty. Sentence was adjourned until April 29.

Julie Court, 27, Martin's girlfriend, and Sukvinder Singh, 25, his chief salesman, were cleared of two charges of evading duty.

Prison chief says he was forced out

The man who was removed from his job as governor of Parkhurst Prison after the breakout of three lifers in January last year is taking his case for constructive dismissal to an industrial tribunal. John Marriott, who was moved to other duties before resigning in November, says that he was never given a chance to defend himself against criticism.

Fallout finding

Western Isles Health Board ruled out the 1986 Chernobyl disaster as a cause of cancer on Benbecula. A local GP had reported that his cancer cases had tripled since 1994.

Bus stop death

A six-year-old girl was killed when a towed car broke free and hit a bus shelter in Sunderland. Natalie Potts's mother and older brother were treated in hospital for cuts and shock.

Wander lonely

The first day of organised daffodil tours of Wordsworth haunts in Cumbria was cancelled because the flowers have yet to bloom. Tours are available until May 29.

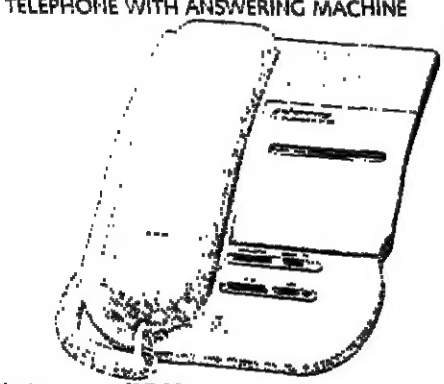
CONNECTION

Douglas Bader did not lose both legs in combat in the Second World War (leading article, March 18) but as a result of a flying accident in 1931.

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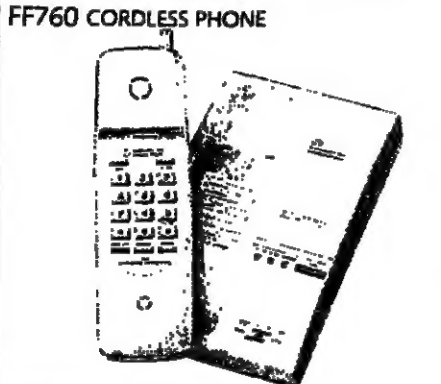
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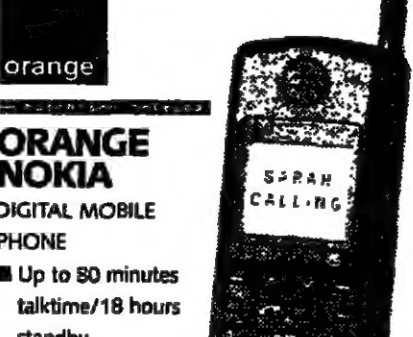
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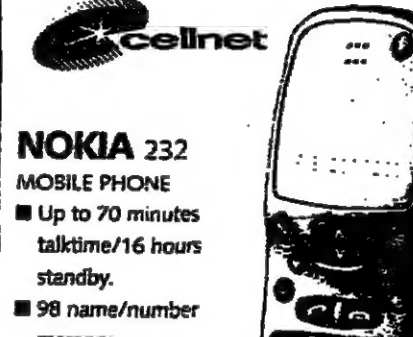
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White Paper proposes sentencing measures that could increase the prison population by a fifth

Repeat of serious crime will carry automatic life term

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

MAIN POINTS

EXTENSIVE changes in sentencing policy were unveiled by the Home Secretary yesterday in the Government's fourth substantial reform of the criminal justice system in eight years.

The White Paper acknowledges that the measures will increase the prison population by about a fifth and add almost £500 million to the annual cost of fighting crime. It says: "The Government is determined to hit serious, dangerous and persistent offenders hard, to provide an effective deterrent and severe punishment for those who nevertheless continue to offend."

The 60-page report outlines a series of reforms in six important areas.

□ **Serious violent and sex offenders:** automatic life sentences will be imposed on offenders convicted for a second time of attempted murder, threat or conspiracy to murder, manslaughter, wounding with intent to do grievous bodily harm, robbery involving use of a firearm, rape, attempted rape and unlawful

sexual intercourse with a girl under 13.

The sentence will be imposed even if the second offence is not the same as the first and any previous conviction for a relevant offence will count as a qualifying conviction, including crimes committed when under the age of 17 and before the new measure becomes law. However, a judge will be able to decide a lesser term if it is thought there were "genuinely exceptional circumstances".

A judge will set the minimum term for "deterrence and retribution", and when that is complete the Parole Board, not a politician, will decide whether a person should be released.

□ **Mandatory minimum sentences for drug dealers:** courts will have to impose a minimum seven-year sentence on an offender aged 18 or over convicted of trafficking in a Class A substance, who has two or more previous convictions for similar offences. Class A drugs include cocaine, heroin and Ecstasy. The sentence will apply to offences of producing, supply-

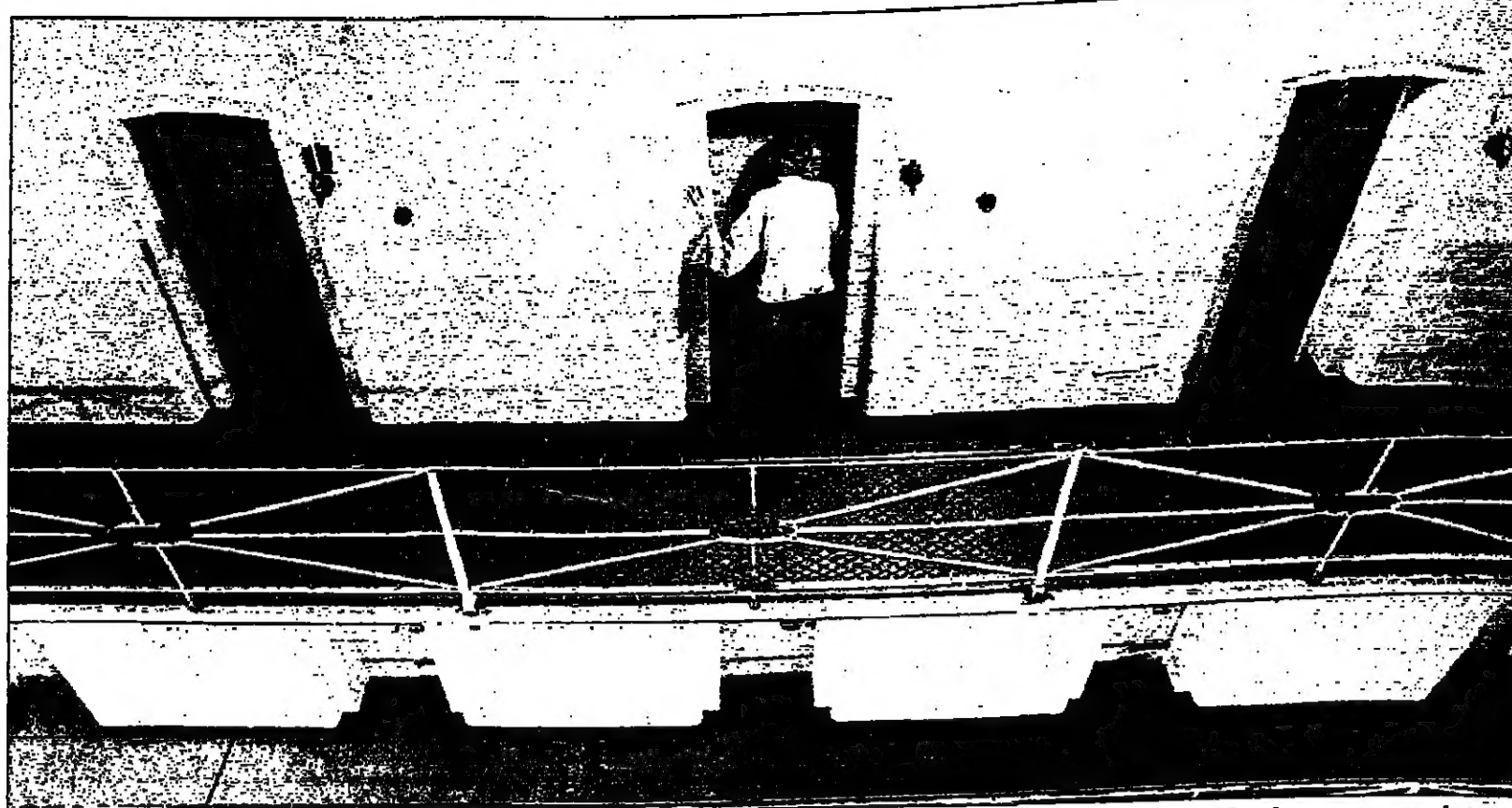
ing and possessing a Class A drug and importing or exporting.

Any previous similar conviction will count as a qualifying offence, including those committed when under 17 and any committed before the proposals become law. But the minimum term will be imposed only where the third conviction relates to an offence committed after the White Paper proposals become law.

□ **Mandatory minimum sentences for burglars:** courts will be required to impose a minimum sentence of three years on an offender aged over 18 convicted of a domestic burglary who has two or more previous similar convictions.

The mandatory sentence will apply to any previous convictions for similar offences committed after the measures become law. The three previous convictions must relate to separate court appearances.

□ **Abolition of automatic early release and parole:** offenders should serve the full term ordered by the court. For the first 12 months of a sentence or all of a year-long sentence, a prisoner will earn remission of six days a month.



Prisoners, including those at Pentonville, above, would have automatic early release and parole abolished under the new proposals

A prisoner sentenced to 12 months will earn maximum remission of about 2½ months compared with the current automatic release after six months.

Over 12 months a prisoner will be able to earn three days a month by co-operation and a further three days a month for "positive good behaviour".

The maximum earned early release will be 20 per cent of a sentence.

Under supervision after their release for a minimum of three months or 15 per cent of the original prison sentence.

The White Paper says that the Government does not expect an increase in the time offenders spend in jail. The Lord Chief Justice would be expected to issue a direction to judges urging them to take into account the abolition of parole and of automatic early release when handing down their sentences.

□ **Mentally disordered of-**

fenders: courts would be allowed to pass a prison sentence and order immediate hospital admission.

The Government plans automatic life sentences for repeat serious offences to be in force by October 1997 and the other proposals by October 1999.

□ **Protecting the Public:** The Government's strategy on Crime in England and Wales (HMSO: £9)

Leading article, page 21

Plans could mean at least 10,000 more prisoners

By OUR HOME CORRESPONDENT

THE COST

A MASSIVE investment in new jails will be needed to meet the 10,000 rise in the prison population in England and Wales expected from the tougher sentencing plans. It is estimated that the cost of building and running the extra prisons will be about £3 billion over 25 years.

Michael Howard has won Treasury support for a minimum of 12 prisons to be built even though he has to find the cash for recommendations in the Learmont report on prison security.

He has to decide whether to act on Learmont's recommendation to build a "supermax" prison to hold 300 of the most violent criminals, and a control jail for disruptive inmates at a total cost of more than £120 million.

It is understood that cost forced the Home Secretary to scrap plans for even tougher minimum terms of five years for persistent burglars and ten years for Class A drug dealers.

Last night penal reform groups condemned Mr Howard's plans and said that Britain was in danger of having huge numbers of people in jail or on probation. Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said: "These proposals are more likely to reappear in the Conservatives' manifesto than on the statute book."

He questioned whether the country could afford the pris-

on-building programme and the cost of running new jails when the Government wanted to reduce public expenditure.

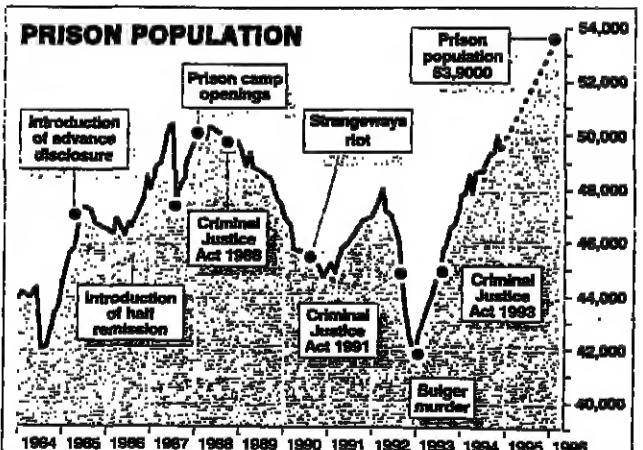
Mr Fletcher said that there was some evidence from the United States that a huge increase in the number of people on probation or in prison had led to a fall in crime. But he said: "At what cost? In some states they are wringing their hands at the cost of putting so many people in prison."

The 12 new jails, each holding 800 inmates, are in addition to two being built at Fazakerley on Merseyside and Bridgend in Mid Glamorgan, plus four planned at Salford in Greater Manchester, Telford in Shropshire, Lowdham Grange near Nottingham and northeast Essex.

All the new jails will be built under the private finance initiative in which private-sector companies design, build, finance and manage the prison. The taxpayer then pays the private sector an annual fee for 25 years.

There are currently 135 state and private jails in England and Wales holding 53,941 inmates compared with 183 in France holding 52,658 inmates. In Spain, Italy and Germany the prison population has risen.

It costs £23,000 a year to keep a prisoner, compared with an annual fee per pupil of £13,300 at Winchester and £12,900 at Eton.



Bill after Bill hints at second thoughts

By FRANCES GIBBS
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL HOWARD'S sentencing plans risk sharing the fate of other recent criminal justice laws, becoming victims of a radical rethink shortly after reaching the statute book.

The White Paper is the latest in a cascade of criminal justice proposals in the past six years which have seen drastic swings in sentencing policy. Lord Taylor of Gossforth, the Lord Chief Justice, has complained that in that time there have been more Criminal Justice Acts than in the previous 60.

The biggest policy swing followed the Criminal Justice Act 1991, which ushered in means-related fines and stopped courts from taking into account more than two of an offender's previous convictions. With tight controls on the use of custody fewer people were jailed.

But in 1993 the Cabinet brought in a Criminal Justice Act allowing courts to take all previous convictions into account. Policy shifted from reserving jail for the worst

offences — partly to avoid overcrowding — to a greater use of jail with heavier terms. Paul Cavadino, chairman of the Penal Affairs Consortium, says that in 1990 a White Paper argued that prison could be "an expensive way of making bad people worse". "Yet in 1993 Michael Howard memorably told the Conservative Party that 'prison works'."

The Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 brought in a host of tougher sentencing provisions for young offenders and tighter bail laws.

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Lords likely to defeat Home Secretary in clash over limits of judicial discretion and political power

Judges claim Howard is on wrong side of the law

By FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

MICHAEL HOWARD'S announcement on jail terms yesterday signalled a new stage in the most public and bitter fight between ministers and judges in recent history. The proposals are almost certain to face a defeat in the House of Lords where senior judges including the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor of Gossforth, will line up to oppose them.

Lord Hailsham of St Marylebone, a former Conservative Lord Chancellor, has already told the Home Secretary of his concern that the plans fetter judicial discretion.

He said yesterday: "I understand what Michael Howard is trying to do. None of us wants dangerous criminals wandering around. But sentencing should be left to the courts."

"If a sentence is thought to be too lenient, it can be challenged by an appeal by the Attorney-General to the Court of Appeal, although I

appreciate the resources may be insufficient to do this more widely than now. It should not, however, be done by the executive."

Lord Hailsham added: "If you really want to reduce crime, the way to do it is improve the detection and conviction rates. After that you can consider the penalty."

Initial trailing of the plans provoked an unprecedented attack from Lord Taylor, who warned that they would achieve little more than "a bonanza for prison architects". They would not deter criminals and could prompt more murders, he said. Lord Donaldson of Lynton, a former Master of the Rolls, Lord Ackner, a retired law lord, and Lord Justice Rose, a senior Court of Appeal judge, have publicly voiced their concerns.

Behind the row lies a deeper conflict over the roles of judges and ministers. The normal tension between the executive

THE DEBATE

aid judiciary has deteriorated into mistrust and a view on both sides that their roles are not understood or respected.

The dispute is exceptional for the depth of feeling involved and the public nature of the hostilities. The judges, according to some in the Government, are the last bastion of the liberal establishment.

They stand accused of undermining its fight on law and order with soft sentences. The new proposals will fetter their discretion and ensure sentences are tougher. But the judges point out that their sentences are in line with the existing statutory framework, itself created by Parliament.

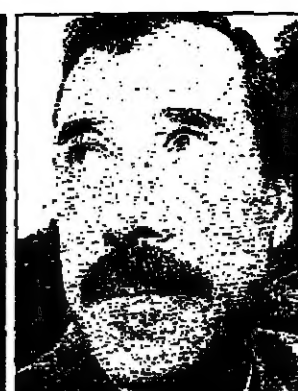
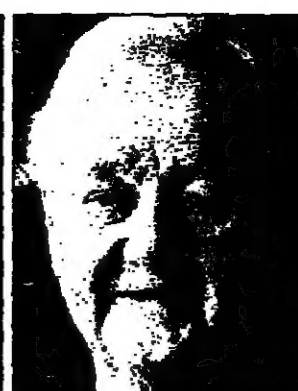
A second source of friction is the power of judges to overrule ministers' decisions in the civil courts. Michael Howard in particular has suffered a series of adverse rulings in judicial reviews. Judges maintain they are merely applying

the law and determining whether a minister has acted within the powers given to him by Parliament — a function fundamental to their role of protecting the rights of an individual versus the State.

But judicial review is, as Lord Hailsham said, a "growth industry" and increasingly judges are broadening its scope. Yesterday he agreed it had gone too far: "I do think judicial review has got a bit out of hand. I think the judges, perhaps through rulings of the House of Lords, ought to rein it back."

The judges do not want the dispute to become a constitutional clash. They are at pains to emphasise their belief in Parliament's supremacy and their willingness to apply the law. Likewise, Michael Howard is expected to keep back from telling a judge his judicial duties, as some have urged him to do. And MPs are expected to refrain from questioning judges' motives.

Even so, the dispute will not die quietly. There is one extra



The proposals would fetter judges' constitutional duty to do justice in mercy on behalf of the Queen. How is a judge to perform this where a second conviction for a violent crime followed gross provocation, yet a life sentence has to be imposed? Judges have been able to direct a jury that provocation provides no defence but is a factor taken into account when sentencing. That will not be possible under the proposals.

— Sir Frederick Lawton, former Court of Appeal judge

We support Mr Howard's aims but his methods are wrong and unnecessary. No one wants violent offenders wandering around if they can be taken out of circulation. But this is soluble under the present system. We have the possibility of life imprisonment for rapists and for wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. If you want longer sentences, the answer is to make it easier for prosecution to appeal against over-lenient sentences.

— Lord Lane, former Lord Chief Justice

The judiciary's independence must be safeguarded and these proposals encroach on that. I support the Lord Chief Justice's point that juries are more likely to acquit in the face of a certain life sentence... To reduce crime, detection and conviction rates must be improved — after that you can consider the penalty. If sentences need increasing, that should be done by the Attorney-General at the Appeal Court.

— Lord Hailsham of St Marylebone, former Lord Chancellor

For too long we have added to the list of innocent victims by shirking the responsibility of properly safeguarding the public. This White Paper seeks to put that right. The causes of crime are the criminal activities of a minority of citizens. They must be made to take responsibility for their actions. If they can be rehabilitated, all well and good, but if they persist in antisocial activities, security must be the first priority.

— Chief Superintendent Brian Mackenzie of Durham police

ingredient which will fuel debate: the personalities involved.

Mr Howard, a high-profile minister, takes personally the court overrulings and sees them as public humiliation. Some of his supporters have consequently indulged in a

"whispering campaign" against the judges. Brian Mawhinney, Tory party chairman, openly invited people to write in complaining about soft sentences.

The campaign was condemned by Lord Donaldson as "without precedent in my

lifetime" which raised serious constitutional issues. Mr Howard's time at the Home Office has coincided with the chief judgeship of Lord Taylor, the first media-friendly Lord Chief Justice. The present public dispute would have been inconceivable between

predecessors such as, for example, Douglas Hurd and Lord Lane.

Lord Taylor makes speeches, gives interviews and does not mince his words when roused. He is not likely to give way quietly; and the media will be at the ringside.

Third strike and pizza thief is out for 25 years

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

JUST over a year ago Jerry Williams was sentenced to 25 years in prison for stealing a slice of pizza from four young boys eating their lunch on the boardwalk at a Los Angeles beach. All four testified that Williams and an unidentified companion had intimidated them before ambushing down the pier and laughing at the success of this miniature theft.

Despite the apparent absurdity of the crime, the judge passed a maximum sentence. Williams, he said, was sent to jail for being more than an intimidating 6ft 5in bully.

The warehouse packer from Los Angeles already had convictions for robbery, attempted robbery, drug possession, and riding a stolen motorcycle. Under California's "three-strikes-and-you're-out" law the slice of pizza was, quite literally, the final straw.

The case has become a cause célèbre in California, whose high-profile adoption of the legislation in 1994 has been used in 1,500 cases and drawn both praise and condemnation. Under the three-strikes law anyone with two "serious" or "violent" convictions can be jailed for 25 years to life for any third offence, no matter how insignificant.

Only 30 federal cases have been brought to court of which seven have been completed and 18 are pending. The American judicial system is such that fewer violent crimes are covered under federal law. It is the individual states where penalties have been most severe: 23 states have their own version of three-strikes legislation.

The conditions of the law vary enormously depending on the state. In California, 500 felonies can trigger three

strikes whereas it is 13 in Wisconsin, which has decreed that these must relate to assault. No one in Wisconsin has been subject to the new policy.

Many legal experts believe the law can only clog the local criminal and civil justice systems, particularly in cities. There are also anomalies. In San Francisco, for example, the district attorney has said he will implement three strikes in only the most extreme cases.

A vociferous opposition has questioned whether the law is catching the habitual offender or merely a group of minor drug users and petty thieves. The public has been sold on a notion of ridding the streets of violent predators — and left with the high cost of jailing low-level offenders.

Walter Dickey, a professor of criminal law and former head of Wisconsin's Department of Corrections, said: "If you are a defence lawyer it's very hard to advise anyone to plead guilty to the third offence and you're not going to plead the second one either. Already the courts are getting clogged."

Proponents of the system claim that many counties in California have kept backlogs to a minimum. They say the offenders trapped have compiled records that belie any contention that the new regime is aimed at offenders who are more nuisance than miscreant.

"You can't just look at the current offence," Kathy Storton, an assistant district attorney in Sacramento, said. "Any discussion of three strikes has to include discussion of the person's record. These people are being punished for being recidivists."

Addict who admitted 19 burglaries walks free

By A STAFF REPORTER

A CRACK and heroin addict escaped jail yesterday after admitting 19 burglaries, two attempted burglaries and an offence of deception and theft.

David Potter, 25, of Islington, north London, had pleaded guilty at an earlier hearing to one attempted burglary and one theft, asking that another 21 offences be taken into consideration.

He was sentenced at Snaresbrook Crown Court, east London, to two years' probation on each of the two counts, to run concurrently, with the condition that he attend a drug rehabilitation centre in Bristol.

Judge Timothy King had given Potter a chance before sentencing to prove he intended to give up drugs.

Martin Haukeland, for the prosecution, said that Potter had been seen trying to break into a flat in Holloway, north London, last September. The theft charge related to the shoplifting of two Kodak films, toothpaste and some face cream from a chemist's.

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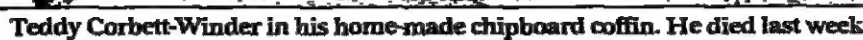
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Bill him I thought

BY IAN MURRAY

He was commenting on one of the 96 cases referred to the Funeral Ombudsman Scheme since it was set up in May 1994. Mislaidd ashes, poorly laid-out bodies and family



old people's fears about funeral costs. His daughter, Margaret Rickard, said: "He died in hospital, which threw his plans slightly. He thought he would die in his own bed and the original idea was to be tipped straight into his coffin. He used to keep his dirty washing in it."

BY ROBIN YOUNG

A Sheffield public analyst who bought 16 "fresh" turkeys in the run-up to last Christmas found that five had been

By ROBIN YOUNG

Bisto Kids: search for the aroma of success

pany has ordered a review of its image, and told its advertising agency, Abbot Mead Vickers, to come up with new ideas for the Kids and the slogan "Ah Blisto." The company said it regarded them and the aroma trail passing beneath their upturned noses as "very strong ciphers" associated with the brand, and denied any intention of dispensing with their services. Ian Aytting, marketing controller, said yesterday: "Everything is up for grabs

including how we use the Bisto Kids."

Recent TV adverts have concentrated on the Bisto Best product, with lingering shots of gravy poured over traditional Sunday dinners. An advertising insider warned yesterday: "It might be better to drop the Bisto Kids rather than try to make them up to date. If they appear with back-to-front baseball caps and trainers it will probably offend traditionalists."

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Clarke gives way to pressure for referendum pledge

By NICHOLAS WOOD AND JILL SHERMAN

KENNETH CLARKE reluctantly bowed to pressure from the Prime Minister and most of the Cabinet yesterday and accepted that a referendum would be held before any decision to join a single European currency.

After weeks of painstaking negotiation with his Chancellor, John Major finally broke the deadlock at a 45-minute meeting of the Cabinet yesterday. He issued a statement saying that his Government had decided that the next Tory election manifesto would promise that British people would have the final say over any attempt to replace the pound with the euro.

But Mr Clarke had the comfort of a number of face-saving measures designed to meet some of his concerns and bridge the gulf between the rival factions in the Tory party. Critically, the Cabinet confirmed that the next election manifesto would leave open the question of whether, in the next Parliament, a Tory government would sign up to economic and monetary union. This decision dashed lingering hopes on the Tory Right that Mr Major might yet be persuaded to fight the election on a hard-line sceptic ticket and rule out the euro until 2002.

Mr Clarke was also reassured by a promise that if the Cabinet backed a single currency — most probably in 1998 — ministers would have to resign if they wanted to campaign for a No vote in a referendum. A further commitment that the referendum pledge would apply only for the lifetime of the next Parliament made it easier for the Chancellor to back down.

Any Cabinet decision to embrace the euro would be followed by legislation making the necessary changes and including provision for a referendum. If Parliament voted for the Bill, a referendum would be the final hurdle.

Any referendum would be decided by a simple majority of those voting and the question would be a simple Yes/No to a question along the lines of: "Should the UK take part in single European currency as from January 1, 1999."

Senior Labour officials said that Tony Blair would not be bounced into making a quick decision on a referendum. Policy remained that the people would be consulted either through a referendum or through a general election. The Labour leader does not plan further clarification until much nearer the general election. The early manifesto paper on which all party members will be hallooed this autumn will not include a decision on a referendum.

Tory MPs backed the Cabinet's decision, although the most implacable sceptics protested at the failure to close off the option of joining a single currency for another five years and demanded a wider referendum covering all aspects of Britain's role in Europe.

One rightwinger pointed out that Mr Clarke's bluff had been called after his resignation threat and he would never be able to use it again. "The Prime Minister is now in a much stronger position on the inter-governmental conference as Ken won't be able to

Pro-Europe Tories have come out the winners

The chances of British participation in a European single currency have been made more, rather than less, likely as a result of yesterday's carefully crafted compromise on a referendum. The terms give the pro-Europeans all that they can realistically have sought, and concede little to the sceptics, and nothing to Sir James Goldsmith and his allies.

John Major has yet again shown his skills as a manager of his Cabinet. In more than five years of turbulence in the Tory party, he has not lost a single Cabinet minister over Europe. This is because he has brought along his ministers at each stage. In this case, Mr Major waited — and did not send out Malcolm Rifkind's paper — until he was sure Mr Clarke was on board. The only Cabinet resignation he has faced on a political issue was that of John Redwood last June over the leadership election, on which he had not been consulted.

Admittedly, Mr Clarke looked uncomfortable at yesterday's news conference. He was unusually evasive about his personal position, saying: "In the case of these circumstances I accepted a collective decision." He made plain how narrow the terms were on which he had supported a referendum. This was solely because at the time of the general election, no one will know for certain whether a single currency will go ahead at all in the next Parliament, let alone whether Britain will join. Hence it is solely because the Government would not have a mandate one way or another on the issue that he has supported a referendum, not because it is an important decision.

Moreover, Mr Clarke and the pro-



RIDDELL ON POLITICS

Europeans have safeguarded three key points — first, the existing policy of leaving open whether Britain joins any single currency in the next Parliament or later stands and this will not alter before the election, as Malcolm Rifkind made clear; second, the whole Cabinet will have to stand behind any eventual decision and there will be no repetition of the Wilson Cabinet's "agreement to differ" and suspension of collective responsibility over the 1975 referendum; and third, any ballot would come after a decision had been taken by the Government and after MPs had voted on the consequent legislation.

Moreover, the Government wants to avoid the extra hurdle which was introduced into the 1977-78 legislation on Scottish and Welsh devolution by George Cunningham that 40 per cent

of those on the electoral roll should vote in favour, as well as a majority of those voting. This scuppered Scottish devolution, even though a majority of Scots voted in favour. Mr Rifkind insisted that a simple majority of those voting would be taken as confirmation of Parliament's decision.

It is still highly unlikely that a re-elected Tory Government would enter a single currency from the start because of the strength of internal opposition and likely Cabinet resignations. But if a German-French core monetary union were successful, there might be strong business and market pressure on the Government to join.

The new Tory position is similar to

the Labour one of promising to consult the British people either at a general election or via a referendum. Similar, but not identical, since some Labour backers of a single currency believe that the current policy of supporting British participation if the economic conditions are right could be seen as a mandate if Labour won an election with that in its manifesto. In practice, it would not be sufficient. Labour divisions would force the promise of a referendum, probably on the same terms as the Major Cabinet has agreed. And as Lord Howe of Aberavon said yesterday, "pro-Europeans have little to fear from a referendum on the terms now agreed: as in 1975 any government advocating a yes vote would be well placed to win".

PETER RIDDELL

Minister challenges Brussels spending

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

PETER LILLEY mounted a legal challenge yesterday against a decision by the European Commission to launch a spending campaign without the permission of member states.

The Social Security Secretary said that the Commission had exceeded its authority and that Britain would fight the campaign, which is aimed at relieving poverty. Officials said that the challenge amounted to a test case against "high-handedness" by the Commission.

British and German ministers hocked a plan to spend £100 million on schemes including one for the teaching of

computer games and Internet activities in Manchester and another for a debt advice service in Wandsworth, south London. Although that plan was dropped, ministers believe that a new spending programme is aimed at introducing the same activities under a different guise.

Mr Lilley will take his case to the European Court of Justice. He said: "The challenge is not aimed at stopping sensibly planned funding in support of disadvantaged people. The EC has not provided a legal justification for these particular expenditure plans made without the approval of the Council of Ministers."

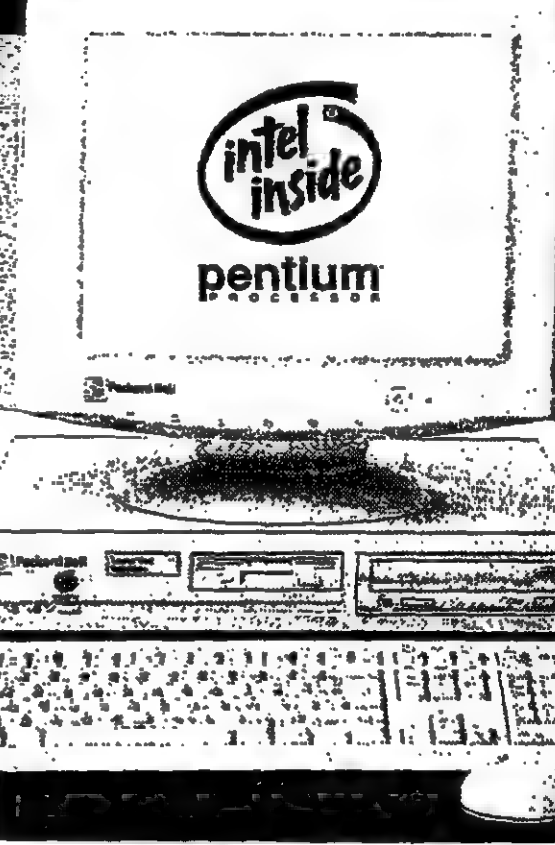
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Pentagon fails to find proof of Gulf War syndrome

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

A STUDY of nearly 19,000 Americans who suffered a variety of illnesses after serving in the Gulf conflict found no evidence of a single cause of Gulf War syndrome.

The Pentagon said its medical teams uncovered no previously unknown serious illness unique to the Gulf War and no common underlying cause for the broad range of medical problems was reported.

Stephen Joseph, Assistant Secretary of Defence for health, said that while the exhaustive two-year study was definitive, it was "not a final answer" and research would continue.

The troops sent to the Gulf after Iraq invaded Kuwait suffered from a "complex mosaic of diseases", some of which could be traced to being in an extremely stressful and dangerous environment. Others suffered from maladjustment to the civilian population and would have become ill even if they had stayed home.

Nearly one-fifth of those studied had psychological problems. Another fifth had ill-defined ailments, a "grab-bag" of symptoms that did not point to a specific cause or diagnosis. A similar number had muscular or skeletal prob-

lems, one in ten was found to be healthy, and the remainder had conditions involving the nervous system, skin disease, digestion and breathing.

In only a few cases were the symptoms found so serious that patients were unable to work. The results were consistent with preliminary Pentagon reports released during the early stages of the survey.

The study was initiated to deal with the belief, still persistent among many veterans, that they suffer from a mysterious disease that could possibly have come from a parasite in the region or from exposure to chemical or biological weapons.

Dr Joseph said the study found only 32 cases linked to a parasite that was initially suspected as a cause of the syndrome. Few of the other diagnoses would have been expected to result from chemical or biological warfare, he said. He added that the Pentagon would continue to provide services to Gulf War veterans.

Medical teams did confirm findings many of the complaints that have come to be lumped together as associated with the syndrome among the 18,929 Gulf War veterans who registered to be tested. The most common were joint

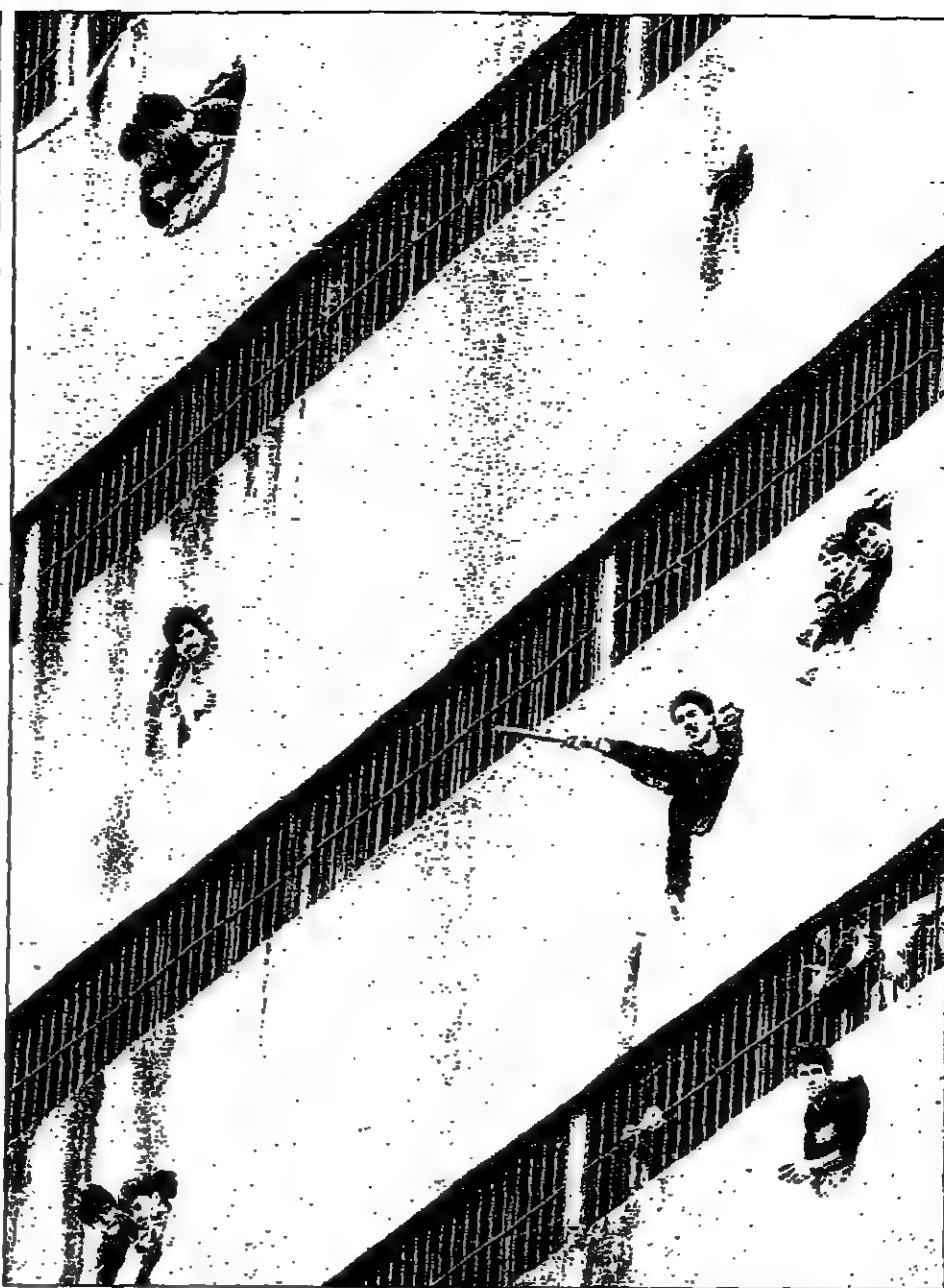
pains, fatigue, headache, memory loss, sleep loss, rash and depression.

In addition to the Pentagon survey, earlier examinations of 57,500 former members of the American forces by the Department of Veterans Affairs also found no pattern to indicate that the Gulf War had produced a mystery disease.

Skeptics are not convinced. Richard Haines, a former major who runs an activist group for veterans, has argued that about 100,000 of them were exposed to toxic substances that have left them with conditions of chemical sensitivity, chronic fatigue and dysfunction of their immune systems.

Mr Haines's group maintains that Gulf War syndrome causes delayed and multiple disorders and sets up various allergies which would explain why no single cause or symptoms have emerged.

President Clinton has taken a personal interest in the medical worries of Gulf War veterans. As a result, the Pentagon changed tack from tending to dismiss their complaints to setting up the largest medical evaluations of their kind ever undertaken, at a cost of more than \$80 million (£33 million).



Inmates protest at Caseros prison in Buenos Aires, one of five Argentine jails where prisoners are demanding better conditions. There were reports of 17 people killed at the Sierra Chica prison, where a woman judge was among 12 hostages

US lobby presses for free electoral broadcasts on TV

FROM TOM RHODES IN WASHINGTON

A GLITTERING cast of politicians, journalists and entertainers is spearheading efforts to persuade American networks to adopt the British approach and offer free airtime to presidential candidates before November's election.

Following the lead of Rupert Murdoch, the chairman and chief executive of The News Corporation, parent company of The Times, a group of celebrities is asking the three big broadcasters to grant two to five minutes each night for the last month of campaigning.

Five former network presenters, including Walter Cronkite, have joined forces with four senators, five former party chairmen, the actors Alec Baldwin and Christopher Reeve, and others, to sign an open letter to ABC, CBS and NBC. The letter, which the group plans to run as a full-page advertisement in The New York Times later this month, highlights the advantages of a political platform free of the negative advertisements that have left an American public exasperated during the primary season.

"We call on the television networks to offer free prime-time airtime to the candidates for use in straight-forward 'talking head' presentations," the letter said. "No tricky images. No unseen narrators. No journalists. No surrogates. Just the candidates making their best case to the biggest audience America assembles every night... no other relatively small change offers much promise of raising the level of campaign discourse."

Paul Taylor, a former cor-

respondent for The Washington Post, has organised the group and raised more than \$70,000 (£45,000) to pay for the advertisement. He has also approached three former presidents - Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford and George Bush - to seek their support.

"It's an idea whose time has come," he said. "The way the conversation has been held, with 30-second attack ads and brief sound bites, the public has become more and more dissatisfied."

The idea was put forward by Mr Murdoch in Washington two months ago when he offered free broadcast time on his Fox Television network as one means of removing the "cancer" of big money from American politics. Mr Murdoch also said Fox would ask the candidates to prepare one-minute videos explaining their position on the ten issues of most importance to the American people, to be screened during special breaks on Fox in the month before the poll.

Mr Murdoch offered additional half-hour slots of free television time for the candidates to explain their positions, provided the other networks transmitted the same political programmes simultaneously. All these ideas, he said, were based on the British example.

At the time Mr Murdoch was doubtful whether the other networks would follow Fox's lead and there was no certainty yesterday that this might happen. Mr Taylor said his suggestion to network executives, who would be forced to lose millions of dollars in advertising, had met only a lukewarm response.

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Gonzalez risked arrest to find work

Call to bar high-speed police chase

FROM GILES WHITTALL IN LOS ANGELES

AMERICAN civil rights groups are demanding new laws to curb police who turn violent after high-speed chases as the FBI launches an investigation into the beating of Leticia Gonzalez and Enrique Funes. Their beating, filmed by a television crew, prompted international outrage. The American Civil Liberties Union, calling the case an example of "high-speed pursuit syndrome" - when police become blinded by rage - want laws to control it. Only the most hard-hearted could not feel for Señora Gonzalez yesterday. Desperate for work, the Mexican left two children and risked arrest with her illegal entry, only to end up in hospital.

Red-light district takes to the road

FROM QUENTIN LETTS IN NEW YORK

NEW YORK prostitutes have mobilised. In a redefinition of the world's oldest profession, "street walkers" have started to drive around Manhattan looking for business.

Nowadays prostitutes are likely to try to catch the attention of potential clients by winding down the passenger window and cooing to fellow motorists at traffic lights. The practice has led to congestion at crossroads in midtown Manhattan.

Captain Thomas Lawrence, commander of New York City's 10th Precinct, said the women have taken to the road to avoid the police officers who patrol urban areas on foot. The police may have to revise their tactics. "They're mobile and you have to be mobile as well," said Captain Lawrence.

There are reports of carloads of prostitutes touring the streets in newish saloon cars, often rented from out-of-state hire firms. Any male motorist who innocently draws up at a red traffic light and casts a sideways look at the neighbouring vehicle may find his glance reciprocated with blown kisses, masquerade winks and indications of cleavage. Male pedestrians have also been prey to such displays.

A New York Daily News reporter described a woman in a 1996 Dodge sedan who hissed at him through her window at some traffic lights near the Plaza Hotel. When he looked at her she asked if he was "looking for fun".

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Former SS captain defends massacre of Rome captives

FROM REUTER IN ROME

A FORMER SS captain accused of organising a Nazi massacre of Italians during the Second World War said yesterday that the atrocity was ordered personally by Hitler and was a "legitimate reprisal" for a partisan attack.

"I am innocent," Erich Priebke was quoted as saying by a lawyer who attended the closed-door committal hearing. Attorneys said the former German officer had blamed Italian partisans for provoking the SS massacre of 335 men and boys, 75 of them Jews, in the Ardeatine caves outside Rome in March 1944.

"The real culprits are the killers of Via Rasella," he was quoted as saying — a reference to the killing of 33 German soldiers by Italian partisans in a Rome street on March 23, 1944, during the Nazi occupation of the Italian capital. "If they hadn't been killed, then there never would have been the retaliation at the Ardeatine caves," Herr Priebke, 52, said.

The SS retaliated the next day by rounding up the massacre victims from Regina Coeli prison, the SS headquarters in Rome, and their own

homes and driving them to the caves. There they were shot in the back of the head in groups of five kneeling on corpses. The SS had ordered ten Italians to be killed for every German victim, although in the end an extra five were shot.

"I'm sorry for what happened. I've lived all this time with it weighing on my heart, but it was a legitimate reprisal," Herr Priebke was quoted as saying. "The order came directly from the Führer and if it wasn't obeyed immediately,



Priebke: shot two of the victims himself

we would have been killed," he said. "It's a terrible thing to think about it now, but at the time there was nothing else to do."

Herr Priebke spoke for the first time in court since he was extradited last November to Italy from Argentina, where he had lived openly since 1948.

The military court judge, Giuseppe Mazzi, is examining the evidence before deciding whether to commit Herr Priebke to trial for war crimes.

Attorneys who spoke to reporters during a break in the hearing said Herr Priebke repeated his defence that he was following orders when he drew up a list of Italians to be killed, and personally killed several victims. "I shot two people like every official was obliged to do," he was quoted as saying.

At the end of his questioning, lawyers said Herr Priebke was granted a request to read a statement. In this, he said he had never held anti-Semitic views and added that his wife's best friend was Jewish. The statement prompted angry shouts from victims' relatives at the hearing.



A group of Croats released by the Serbs cross the River Sava southeast of Zagreb to freedom. Croatia had earlier released 15 Serbs

UN sets Bosnian total of missing at 27,000

BY PETER CAPELLA
IN GENEVA AND
OUR FOREIGN STAFF

ABOUT 27,000 people are unaccounted for and probably dead after the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and most of them are cases of "ethnic cleansing", the United Nations envoy responsible for tracing missing people in former Yugoslavia said yesterday.

After presenting his report to the UN's Human Rights Commission, Manfred Nowak said that most of the killings were carried out in the days

and weeks following the seizure of towns and villages, when direct military confrontation had ceased. "The clear majority are cases of ethnic cleansing, which has nothing to do with armed conflict," he said.

In his report, Mr Nowak said that about 3,000 more people were missing in Croatia. He added that most of the estimated 30,000 who have to be traced are likely to be found in about 350 mass graves, holding anything from three to 1,000 bodies. Most of the graves in Bosnia are near Prijedor, Sanski Most and Srebrenica. The envoy criticised

Belgrade for not allowing him into Yugoslavia, which has always denied that its national army was involved in the Bosnian fighting.

Mr Nowak, who is working with the International War Crimes Tribunal and the International Committee of the Red Cross, said he hopes that excavations would begin before spring is over. But the envoy gave a warning that there is not enough money to start the operation, now entering a critical phase. He launched an appeal for a voluntary fund of \$1 million (£666,000) and for countries to supply

specialists to start excavating mass graves and carry out forensic research.

Mr Nowak indicated that some European and Islamic countries were prepared to finance the operation, if it received explicit backing from the 53-member Human Rights Commission currently meeting in Geneva.

The International Committee of the Red Cross yesterday criticised the failure of all sides to release all prisoners of war. The criticism came after the Serbs freed only four people on Monday, followed by seven more yesterday. Croatia released 15 Serbs.

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Murder ruling in Solar cult inquiry

BY RICHARD CLEBOLD
IN OTTAWA AND
OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE Swiss judge leading the inquiry into the deaths of 54 members of the Order of the Solar Temple cult in 1994 said yesterday that all but 15 had been effectively murdered.

André Piller said there was no evidence that any killer or witness had survived the fires in two Swiss villages and the Morin Heights ski resort in Quebec.

The Quebec Government ordered an investigation yesterday into allegations that the Solar Temple cult had infiltrated the middle management of Hydro-Quebec, the publicly owned electric utility. Michel Côté, a former employee, alleges in a wrongful dismissal suit filed in a Montreal court this week that he was sacked after refusing to join the cult.

Cult members are taught that the world will end in fire and that to pass into the afterworld they must die violently by burning.

Putting the 'gay' back in Paree

FROM ADAM SAGE
IN PARIS

A FILM about drag queens is proving to be one of the hits of the year in France, illustrating the country's sudden fascination with all things camp.

Pédale Douce (Gentle Queen), brought out at the end of last month, met with hostility from the critics. Despite a fine performance by Fanny Ardant as the friend and "alibi" of a businessman who does not want to disclose his homosexuality, the movie was panned. Yet last week it drew 112,000 spectators, a big score for a French film.

Since the success last year of *Gazon Maudit*, about a lesbian, homosexuality has been high on the French agenda and so has cross-dressing. Many television documentaries have devoted lengthy programmes to drag queens.

The duo, Les Sister Queens, have been appearing regularly on variety shows. *Pédale Douce* is merely drawing a public whose appetite has already been sharpened.

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Major's visit to signal backing for free Kiev

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

JOHN MAJOR will spend a day in Ukraine before arriving in Moscow for the nuclear safety summit in a fortnight's time. His talks in Kiev are intended as a signal to those in Moscow calling for a reconstitution of the Soviet Union that Britain is committed to a free and prosperous Ukraine.

The Prime Minister's visit comes after the Duma vote for the restoration of the Soviet

Union caused widespread unease in the former Soviet republics. The subsequent decision by Russia and Belarus to set up a new, closer Commonwealth of Sovereign Republics has also increased the political pressure on Kiev. Britain regards the independence of Ukraine as a vital test of Russian intentions; any attempt to reincorporate Ukraine would be seen as an

attempt to rebuild the Russian empire. Political and material support will also be given to Kiev in an unusual joint visit planned by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, and his German opposite number, Klaus Kinkel. They will hold joint talks with President Kuchma as early as next month. The only other such Anglo-German initiative was

a joint visit to Turkey by Herr Kinkel and Douglas Hurd, the former Foreign Secretary, in 1994. Mr Rifkind visited Ukraine soon after becoming Foreign Secretary, giving his first overseas speech in Kiev. Mr Major will also have talks with President Kuchma, and will underline the Government's determination to boost British exports to, and investment in, Ukraine — now lagging far behind those of Germany, France and Italy. He will also signal British support for the embattled Government's belated economic reforms, and urge Kiev to pass laws protecting foreign investment.

Mr Major's visit, immediately after a one-day trip to the Czech Republic, will be his first to Kiev. He will be the only participant in the Moscow summit to go there on the way to Russia, underlining Britain's determination to bolster pro-Western policies in Ukraine and repair the strained relations Kiev had with most Western countries during the first three years of



Youths in Gorn, Belarus, among thousands who protested at the merger between their republic and Russia

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Lithuania	•	•	•	
Latvia	•	•	•	
Moldavia	•	•		
Russia	•	•	•	•
Tajikistan	•	•		
Turkmenistan	•	•		
Ukraine	•	•		
Uzbekistan	•	•		

independence. His visit assumes added significance after President Yeltsin again cancelled a planned visit to Kiev — the sixth time the Russian leader has failed to keep his promise to finalise agreement on dividing the Black Sea Fleet and Moscow's

overall relations with the former Soviet republic. A key issue for the West and Ukraine is Nato expansion. Nato proposals to open talks with Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic initially worried Ukraine, which insists it is non-aligned. The vehement

Russian opposition has softened this opposition to Nato expansion, but Kiev does not want to be a buffer in a confrontation between Nato troops on its Polish border and strengthened Russian forces in the north. Mr Major will also discuss nuclear safety and

Western aid to shut down all the Chernobyl reactors. Mr Kuchma will join the leaders of the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations on the second day of their Moscow summit on April 20.

Chechen village bombed by Russians

FROM THOMAS DE WAAL IN MOSCOW

RUSSIAN aircraft bombed a village in western Chechnya yesterday, giving the lie to a statement by the Russian Defence Minister that all fighting had stopped.

Villagers fleeing Shalazhi were reported to have said that they had escaped in the night after Russian bombers had destroyed at least 20 houses, wounding dozens of people. One resident said that "half of the village has been destroyed". Another said she just managed to run away barefoot before her house was destroyed.

Shalazhi is one of many Chechen villages that have signed "peace agreements" in the past few weeks in the hope of being spared the fighting. The Russian commander in Chechnya, apologised last week to another of the signatory villages, Kady-Yurt, after it was bombed.

In the same region, the scene of some of the worst fighting of the Chechnya war, it was reported that artillery could be heard through the night near the rebel village of Bamut, a former missile base.

In Moscow, General Pavel Grachev, the Defence Minister, said "no military operations have been conducted since yesterday. Everything has been suspended". He said the ceasefire announced on Sunday by President Yeltsin, which forms the central plank of his new peace plan, was still holding. Yesterday's fighting suggests that the peace plan may be a smokescreen for fighting to continue. Ending the war, or at least being seen to end it, is one of Mr Yeltsin's highest priorities for his June re-election campaign.



Hayden: Chinese are 'racial supremacists'

Countries in Asia accused of racism

FROM ROGER MAYNARD IN SYDNEY

BILL HAYDEN, Australia's recently retired Governor-General, was last night at the centre of a diplomatic row after he accused many Asian countries of being racist.

Mr Hayden, publicising his autobiography in a radio interview, said: "If you want to see racism, racial intolerance, look at some of our neighbours, neighbouring Asian countries." He went on to describe the Chinese as racial supremacists and the Japanese as racial exclusivists.

Mr Hayden said that Dr Mahathir Mohamed, the Malaysian Prime Minister, administered a policy "which means racial discrimination against the Chinese in that country in education and employment opportunity. The Indians in that country are largely dirt poor."

The remarks will embarrass John Howard, the newly elected Prime Minister, whose Government has pledged to improve relations with Asia. Alexander Downer, the Foreign Minister, who is to tour Indonesia, Singapore and Thailand next month, said last night that Mr Hayden's comments were not the view of the Government.

China "weak". China has such poor military equipment that it cannot be sure of successfully attacking any of its neighbours, including Taiwan, according to an Australian Government report released yesterday. (AFP)

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South Africa sends neo-Nazi bombers to jail for 26 years

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

FIVE leaders of South Africa's neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB) were each sentenced to an effective 26 years' imprisonment yesterday for their roles in a bombing campaign by the movement shortly before the first democratic elections in April 1994.

Twenty people were killed and nearly 200 injured in and around Johannesburg during the offensive, which was aimed at disrupting the poll. One victim was Simon Walker, a staff photographer of *The Times*, who was seriously hurt when a device exploded in central Johannesburg and blew up his rented car.

The public benches of the Rand Supreme Court in central Johannesburg were packed yesterday by AWB members in military-style camouflage fatigues as Mr

Justice Monus Fleming delivered sentences on ten men in the dock. Their revolver holsters were empty because they had to hand over their firearms on entering the court building.

Four other AWB members convicted with the other ten last Friday were not in court. They escaped from the high-security Diepkloof prison outside Johannesburg last month and the judge said he would sentence them when they were recaptured.

Abraham Fourie, Johannes Venter, Jaco Nel, Petrus Steyn and Gerhardus Fourie, described by the judge as ringleaders of the bomb campaign, were each jailed for 20 years for murder, ten years for attempted murder and six years for damage to property, the sentences to run concurrently. Under South Afri-

can law long-term prisoners may, at the discretion of the prisons commissioner, be released on parole after serving a third of their sentences.

Various forms of amnesty have resulted in the release of thousands of people detained during the past six years. But a leading Johannesburg lawyer said last night that he did not believe the AWB men would be shown mercy.

Five other men involved in the bombing campaign before the multi-racial elections were sentenced to between five years and 42 months' imprisonment, partly suspended, for stealing cars used in the attacks and illegal possession of arms and explosives.

Eugene Terre'Blanche, the bearded AWB leader, was in the court. Flanked by bodyguards of the movement's



Eugene Terre'Blanche, the Afrikaner Resistance Movement leader, leaves the court flanked by bodyguards

Ystergarde (Iron Guard) who parade in all-black fatigues rather than the camouflage of its rank and file.

He was once a bodyguard himself in a police unit protecting the former President and Prime Minister, John Vorster, but yesterday he appeared subdued as he was hustled to a

car outside while about 200 black demonstrators booed. He said he would comment on the sentences at an AWB rally later in Pretoria.

It was left to Fred Rundle, the AWB's spokesman, to deliver the predictable outburst. He said the sentences were too harsh and would

increase the anger of white rightwingers. "We are heading for civil war," he proclaimed. "We are sitting on a powder keg which is begging to be lit."

Among those listening to the outburst on the court steps was John Keane, whose daughter, Susan, an African

National Congress election candidate, was killed by the bomb that seriously injured Mr Walker. As he watched Mr Terre'Blanche being driven off, he said: "The AWB's senior leaders should also have stood trial. They must have known what was going on."

WORLD SUMMARY

Victoria Falls plea ignored

Harare: The Zimbabwe Government yesterday dismissed international appeals for a halt to the building of more hotels and tourist facilities around the Victoria Falls (Jan Raath writes).

The waterfall is a popular tourist destination, but in recent years there have been warnings that further commercialisation will kill off its attractions. The town has 11 hotels, but another four are planned, including one to be managed by the Sheraton hotel group which will protrude above the tree line.

Ministers desert Rao before poll

Delhi: The resignation of two ministers dealt a blow to the Congress Party of P. V. Narasimha Rao, the Indian Prime Minister, before this month's general elections. P. Chidambaram, the Commerce Minister and architect of India's free-market programme, and M. Arunachalam, the junior Industry Minister, quit in protest over Mr Rao's poll alliance with actress Jayalalitha Jayaram's AIADMK party in Tamil Nadu. (Reuters)

New Japanese liberal party

Tokyo: Emerging leaders from Japan's ruling and opposition camps intend to draw up to 50 MPs into a new liberal party in June. Hajime Funada, associate chairman of the opposition New Frontier Party, said after meeting Yukio Hatoyama, leader of the New Party Sakigake, the ruling coalition's smallest group. "We share the view we will need a new party." (AFP)

Blind driver seen at last

Madrid: José Pinto, 95 per cent blind, who has driven a work for three years, navigating seven miles of traffic by avoiding shadows, was arrested after a tip-off by his employer. Spain's national blind organisation. Police stopped him last year for not having a licence but failed to notice his poor vision. (AP)

Foetus shock for woman of 62

São Paulo: A 62-year-old Brazilian woman who complained of stomach pains discovered she was carrying the skeleton of a foetus conceived outside her womb up to 15 years ago, a surgeon said. She went through her menopause ten years ago. (Reuters)

Kenya opposition self-destructs in violent clashes

FROM SAM KILEY IN NAIROBI

KENYA'S leading opposition parties are on the verge of collapse after days of violent clashes and leadership squabbles, leaving President Moi to rule unchallenged.

The Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Asili and the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy-Kenya have self-destructed and left little prospect of a viable challenge to Mr Moi in the next general election which must be held by 1997.

The two forums split from one another along tribal lines in the run-up to Kenya's first multi-party elections in 1992, after more than 20 years of one-party rule, handing the election to Mr Moi. The two parties have fractured further after controversial intra-party elections which have left the Asili forum so divided that it has two national executive committees, and two sets of branch officials across the country.

Meanwhile, elections inside the Kenya forums have driven an irrevocable wedge between Michael Wamalwa, the parliamentary leader of the opposition, and his party rival, Kaila Odinga. The polls, insiders said, would have to be rerun in at least ten areas, including the capital, Nairobi, and Mombasa, where the returning officer was taken to hospital after rival factions

threw stones at each other and the bishop acting as returning officer resigned in disgust at the mayhem.

Potential voters, and Western donors who put pressure on Mr Moi to allow political pluralism, have been further alienated by Kenneth Matiba, the Asili forum's chairman, who has twice declared that he wants whites and Asians expelled from the former British colony.

Mr Matiba suffered two strokes while in detention in the early 1990s after walking out of Mr Moi's Cabinet to form an underground opposition. Since his illness he has developed a reputation for extreme egotism and a penchant for outrageous statements.

Attempts by Richard Leakey, the Kenyan conservationist and palaeo-anthropologist, to form a coalition under a single presidential candidate to challenge Mr Moi fell apart early in February. Dr Leakey's party, Safina, has been refused registration for nearly a year.

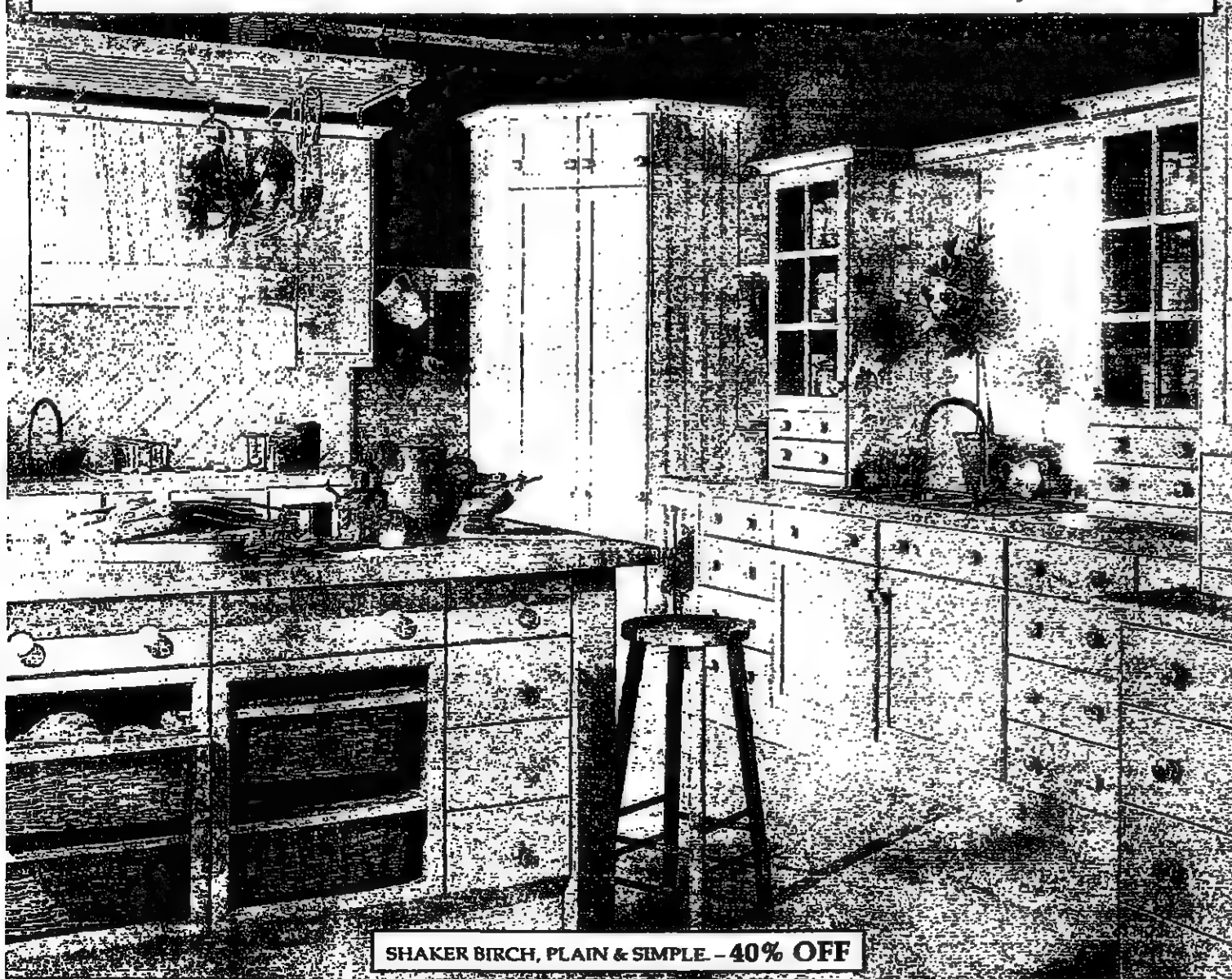
Disgusted with the opposition and impressed by a planned economic recovery programme based on privatisation and an anti-corruption drive, foreign donors recently pledged \$760 million (£500 million) for the Kenya Government.

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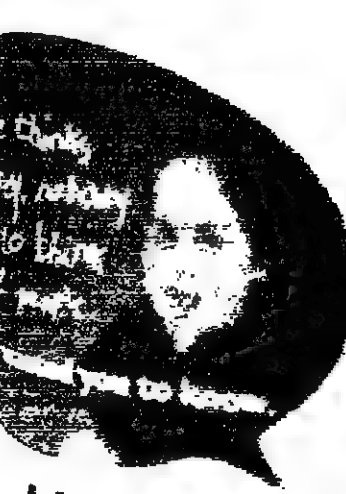
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Outgoing British ambassador warns autocrats of looming showdown with fundamentalists

Arab democracy 'is only way to halt Islamic tide'

FROM MARK HUBAND IN RABAT

ARAB states will be crippled by instability and a worsening crisis of identity unless entrenched rulers increase political freedom, according to a senior British diplomat.

Sir Allan Ramsay, Britain's Ambassador to Morocco until his retirement this week, said that military-backed rulers throughout the Arab world must choose between an end to their autocratic rule or face an increasingly bitter battle with Islamic fundamentalists.

In an interview with *The Times*, Sir Allan, who has spent 40 years as a soldier and diplomat in the Arab world, criticised Arab states for their failure to conduct debate on religious issues, which he sees as threatening the foundations of the Islamic world.

Sir Allan, portraying Islamic fundamentalism as a successor to the failed experiments with Arab nationalism and socialism, predicted extreme instability if the Muslim message failed to provide the

Arab world with the sense of identity the fundamentalists claim to have found. "There's a very definite character to what will happen if it goes the way of nationalism and socialism. Because Islamism attempts to go to the roots of things, I think it is actually fraught with dangers for the



Sir Allan: worked in the Arab world for 40 years

Arabs and for the Islamic religion, because if it does not succeed in its aims then what happens? It doesn't seem to me that there's anything else left, unless there's a reversion to secularism. Islamism is in a sense the last throw of the dice," he said.

Sir Allan said that the governments of the Arab world had failed to steer reform in a way that allowed debate on the separation of religion and politics. He regards such a debate as vital to the stability of the region and the creation of institutions that are capable of bringing development.

"Either you have a reversion to a very ugly form of primitive, very assertive dogmatic Islamism, or you have to go down the path of more participatory politics. Those are the alternatives. I don't think Islam will ever recede," he said. Sir Allan described the Islamic world as largely sapped by the same inertia it experienced

when Europe blossomed during the Renaissance.

"Nobody can say to investors with absolute confidence that any country in the Middle East is stable. And they are not stable because too much of the best of all that is available is concentrated in too few hands."

"As an alternative it's not enough to say that the answer is in religion or a return to a simpler structure," he said.

Sir Allan said the gap between the Islamic and non-Islamic world could not be bridged unless Western countries rediscovered their own spirituality and recognised the importance of religion to Muslims when reassessing the framework for dialogue. "We in the West have to recover something that we have lost if we're to make sense of understanding the Muslim world. Equally, they have to accept that you can't approach a dialogue or any meaningful relationship on the assumption that yours is the conclu-



Arab regimes are accused by Sir Allan Ramsay of failing to prevent the merging of religion and politics

sive and only system." The maintenance of non-democratic systems and the absence of meaningful debate were the main hindrances to genuine acceptance of Israel by the

Arab world, said Sir Allan, who was posted to the British Embassy in Cairo during the 1970s before stints in Afghanistan and Iraq. "If peace, and the existence of Israel is going

to become ... accepted ... without involving major inputs of Western diplomacy and military assistance, then this ... has to be accepted by the Arab people at large. And

that can only come by their more active involvement in the politics of their own countries, and that can only come through a form of representative democracy," he said.

Likud hit by lawsuit on war in Lebanon

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERUSALEM

ARIEL SHARON and Binyamin Begin, leading members of Israel's main right-wing opposition Likud Party, are involved in a public slanging match over the true aims of the 1982 invasion of Lebanon.

The politically damaging clash, sparked by a £76,000 lawsuit by Mr Sharon, a former Defence Minister, is regarded as an electoral gift to the ruling Labour Party as it comes less than two months before a general election that could decide the future of the Middle East peace process.

To the dismay of senior Likud campaign officials, Mr Begin, son of the late Prime Minister, Menachem Begin, has openly accused Mr Sharon of misleading his father about his intention to send the army as far as Beirut during the three-year Lebanon war in which 650 Israelis and thousands of Arabs were killed.

"It is clear he [Sharon] misled the Prime Minister on this central issue," wrote Mr Begin in an affidavit submitted to a Tel Aviv court in which Mr Sharon is suing the leading Hebrew paper *Haaretz* and its correspondent, Uzi Ben-Jamin, over an article which claimed: "Menachem Begin knows very well that Sharon deceived him."

Mr Sharon has denied that he had lied to or misled Menachem Begin, who resigned in 1983 and later died at the age of 78, apparently deeply distressed at the course the war had taken.

Colony engaged in phone thuggery

FROM TOM WALKER IN HONG KONG

FROM the place that gave the world kung fu comes the latest in martial arts: the Motorola chop. Hong Kong's overstretched police force is blaming a rising number of knock-out punches on the mobile phone.

With one in six adults in the colony now carrying a phone, hardly a week goes by without someone suffering a cordless crack across the head.

"You could say it's the weapon of choice," said Ray Pierce, the deputy district commander of Mong Kok police station in Kowloon. "People have one in their hand, and they go for it — although it does seem to be rather expensive."

The latest incident occurred at the weekend when Leung Yan-kam, 60, was attacked by three youths wielding a mobile phone. He had accused them of queue-barging. Mr Leung was admitted to hospital with head injuries.

Last month, Wong Yuk-man, the editor of an anti-China daily entitled *Mad Dog*, was acquitted of charges that he and a colleague had wounded a seafood wholesaler with a mobile phone during a traffic dispute.

In another recent case a court heard how a taxi driver had bludgeoned his girlfriend after discovering her affair with another man. A further incident involved a financial manager accused of hitting his wife with a phone in a Valentine's Day tit.

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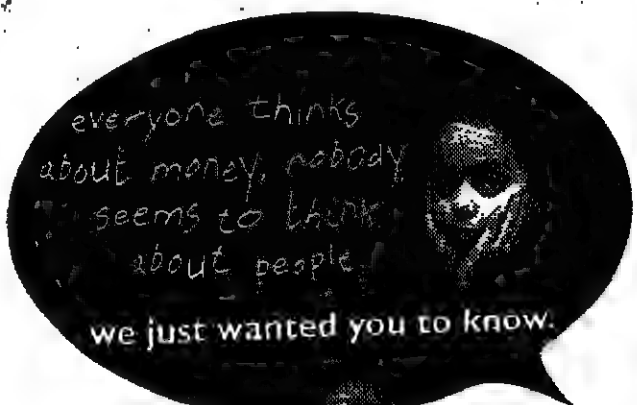
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Owners who want a perfect dog are turning to powerful drugs, Giles Coren reports

Why it's a dog's life on Prozac

Dogs have everything. First they had dinky little coats and designer sweaters, then special dog hotels, little doggie chocolate boxes, dog weddings (and divorces), then came an anti-quarantine campaign advocating passports for dogs. When it was recognised that they suffered psychological problems not so different from human ones, they started going in for analysis. Now, it seems, they have existential angst, and have joined the trendiest bandwagon of all.

A professor at one of America's top veterinary schools, the appropriately named Tufts University, has just published *The Dog Who Loved Too Much* (Hodder & Stoughton, £5.99) in Britain, and a new era in veterinary treatment is about to come under scrutiny. Early on in the book comes the announcement that will have Barbara Woodhouse turning in her grave: "Prozac and other psychotropic medications can be used quite effectively for the treatment of many veterinary behavioural problems..."

Now, this is all very well in America, where dogs are not put down but "experience euthanasia", and where "high-rise syndrome" generates magazine stories like "Is Your Cat Contemplating Suicide?". But this is England, where a dog is man's best friend, not a "furry family member", and problem pets were traditionally treated with a sack, a reservoir and a large rock.

Dr Nicholas Dodman's rationale for prescribing Prozac hinges on the fact that dogs' brains are structurally and functionally similar to our own, and that the neurotransmitters (which control moods and social and sexual behaviour) are identical in the two species. "It is hardly surprising, then," he writes, "that similar things can go wrong with humans and dogs, or that similar medications can be used for treatment of these problems."

He looks at such difficulties as blanket-sucking in dachshunds, rage syndrome in springer spaniels, anxiety in afghans, and the obsessive-compulsive disorders that are apparently most frequent in

labradors and golden retrievers. There is the story of a Jack Russell that is cured of its propensity for telephone-munching by being prescribed Valium, and a rottweiler called Rocky who wears "a spectacular chrome-plated collar" and chews not instruments of telecommunication, but people.

While making clear that he seeks to cure problems by re-training and environmental readjustment, Dr Dodman laments the time that such approaches consume and explains that "drugs such as fluoxetine (Prozac), which increases serotonin levels, can be extremely effective at curtailing dominance-related aggression, enabling owners to quickly gain the upper hand".

This approach is gaining currency in Britain, but according to Dr Roger Mugford, Britain's most influential animal psychologist, it is to be discouraged as strenuously as possible.

"I take a very negative view of these quick-fix drugs," he says. "I have used Prozac in three cases, and seen no benefits at all. Dr Dodman's



Afghans get anxious, springer spaniels have rage syndrome, and golden retrievers like these three are prone to obsessive-compulsive disorders

book is very readable, and many people will find it amusing, but the references to Prozac are overdue."

Dr Mugford's Animal Behaviour Centre, the biggest in the world, has been eyeing developments carefully since a television news item on Dr Dodman's theories was broadcast two years ago. "He had a great dare that was mutilating itself," says Dr Mugford, "and this was going to be the first case of curing the problem with Prozac. But the whole thing was scientifically trashy. The efficacy just isn't scientifically sustained. And I certainly won't be using it again."

The problems seem almost infinite. "For a start, there are the paradoxical effects of using Prozac, which are well documented in human cases. Things are known to get worse before they get better, which a human can easily understand. But how do you explain that to a dog? And if a dog starts to suffer from side-effects he can't just stop taking the drug. And his owner will never know one way or the other, because first results take 40 days to show."

The book is a good read but a bit unethical, Dr Dodman has come from a pharmacological background, and is not behaviourally orientated — the best way to make a dog happier is to change its lifestyle. And with a dog, the smallest things make all the difference.

For all Dr Dodman's talk of neuro-transmitters, it is this — the fact that you can improve a dog's life so easily — that makes us so different from our pets. It cannot be necessary to prescribe happy-pills to a species that gets excited about chasing a stick.

Back at the Animal Behaviour Centre, veterinary surgeon Samantha Lindley has been fielding dozens of calls from vets all over the country. "It must be all the publicity about Prozac that has got them excited," she says.

I got a call recently from a vet who wanted to give it to a cat that was attacking a new cat its owner had recently bought. Well, you can't cure a cat of its natural territorial instincts just like that. There are no zap-quick panaceas. But vets are wanting to use it as a first-line treatment, which would be a disaster, because if you disguise the symptoms you miss any number of clinical reasons why an animal might behave aggressively.

Prozac is not licensed for use on animals, and Eli Lilly has not promoted it for that.

Vets who use it do so without any legal protection. If you found a clinical problem you would never treat it with some new antibiotic that had worked on humans and might or might not be OK for dogs. "The reason it has caught on in America is that they want animals to conform exactly to their way of life. They must have a perfect dog. But the problem is that dogs do bark. And they do get excited when the postman comes, and occasionally pee in the wrong places." If they didn't, they wouldn't be dogs.

As long as the vets keep consulting them, Roger Mugford and Samantha Lindley will endeavour to save us from the Prozac pooches. But the pressure of the transatlantic designer lifestyle may prove too much.

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Watch out for the signs of colo-rectal cancer

Red for danger

THE news that the Pope had needed surgery for cancer of the colon increased people's awareness of a disease, which accounts for 19,000 deaths in Britain each year, and the demand for screening. An early diagnosis offers the best chance of reducing the present death rate: only a third of patients survive five years after diagnosis.

At the recent meeting of the British Society of Gastroenterology two research projects, reported in *General Practitioner* magazine, demonstrated the success of screening in the detection of cancer of the colon and rectum, and showed that the cost of each life saved by colo-rectal screening was less than that of a life saved by breast screening.

Cancer of the colon is one of the few diseases in which the richer the patient is, the greater the likelihood of developing the condition. Statistics released by the Cancer Research Campaign show that the highest rates of cancer of the colon occur in social classes one and two, the lowest in four and five, and that there is an intermediate rate for people in social class three. A low-fibre, high-calorie and high-protein diet is suspected of accounting for this.

The Medical Research Council study presented at the gastroenterologists' meeting investigated 533 patients between the ages of 55 and 64 from two Hertfordshire practices who attended for screening with a colonoscope, which involves passing an endoscope from the anus to the appendix. Seventy-five per cent of those invited attended, and 6 per cent of these had polyps

which, if they had been left untreated, would have been likely in time to have become cancers.

Another survey showed that examination of all patients over 60 with a flexible sigmoidoscope, a cheaper and easier procedure than colonoscopy, will pick up 80 per cent of the cases in which a potentially malignant polyp is present. Twenty per cent of cancers, and polyps, grow in the large bowel on the left-hand side of the abdomen, where they are beyond the reach of the sigmoidoscope but can be seen with a colonoscope. Through-

out the colon flat tumours are more easily missed by the examining doctor than are polypoid ones.

A national screening programme is likely to be at least five years off. Until then, people must watch vigilantly for the early signs of colo-rectal cancer. A recent report in *The Practitioner* draws attention to the importance of rectal bleeding, particularly when it occurs for the first time in an older patient. If the blood is dark rather than bright red, if it is associated with a change of bowel habit, and if there are no haemorrhoids or fissures which could account for it. All rectal bleeding should be reported to the doctor, but bleeding is not the only indication of trouble: change in the frequency and the nature of bowel movement, loss of weight and unexplained anaemia are all initial symptoms. Particular care is needed in monitoring patients who have a family history of the disease, or who suffer from ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease.



MEDICAL BRIEFING
Dr Thomas Stuttford

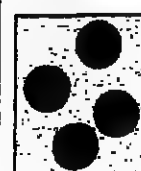
New chestnuts to join the old



THE horse chestnuts, together with the trees in the way of the planned Newbury bypass, have been felled. That will remove a worry from mothers, for there are well-authenticated reports that conkers if eaten cause kidney failure, liver disease and gastroenteritis. In animals they can cause a breakdown in red blood cells and, by interfering with blood coagulation, haemorrhage.

German doctors have for generations treated varicose veins and piles with extract of horse chestnut. A survey published in *The Lancet* reviewed the treatment with horse-chestnut extract of 200 cases of chronic venous insufficiency, the condition in which fluid collects in the legs after a patient has suffered damage to the deep leg veins. Usually support stockings are recommended to prevent skin pigmentation, dermatitis and chronic ulceration. But, in a trial in Germany, it was found that aescin, a complex substance extracted from horse chestnuts, was as effective.

A rash colour for heart pills



SWEET manufacturers are well aware that some colouring dyes produce adverse effects. Recently, cases reported in the *BMJ* have demonstrated that the colouring used in some pills can also have side-effects which could be mistakenly attributed to the actual drug.

The ACE inhibitor, enalapril, recommended for the treatment of high blood pressure and heart failure, can cause skin rashes. In one or two cases a rash has been shown to be related to the colouring matter in the tablet, and when the pills have been changed the rash has disappeared.

This occasional reaction should not discourage other people from taking enalapril. These ACE inhibitors have been shown to be very effective, but less than a third of patients with heart failure are receiving them. The medical journal *Monitor* recently contrasted the increasingly effective treatment of some chronic diseases such as asthma and diabetes with the laissez faire approach to heart failure.

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Drink and drugs are twin demons

Magnus Linklater offers a chaser for our irrational fears

Walking out of court, heads bowed, the three 19-year-olds offered few clues to link them with the orgy of destruction that had brought them there. They wore short haircuts, well-pressed suits and patterned ties. They were, as the police conceded, well-brought-up middle-class boys. Yet, in the space of just a few hours, they had, in the judge's words, "exulted in a rampage of violence", beating and kicking a church caretaker, then attacking a witness who came to his aid, with such force that they left the imprint of their shoes on his face and arm.

The assaults by three pupils from Cardiff High School, sentenced to two years' youth custody on Monday, were hardly on the same level as the squalid murder carried out by three British soldiers in Cyprus the previous week. But in both cases what turned a perfectly ordinary trio of young men into a gang of hoodlums was a massive intake of alcohol. Both had spent the evening ordering drink after drink until they had reached that state where the brakes are let off and instincts career out of control. Alcohol was the fatal accelerator.

What is surprising is that none of the outraged coverage that followed the Cyprus attack, and, in a lesser extent, the rampage of the Cardiff schoolboys, included any indictment of a drug that is at least as lethal as heroin or crack cocaine. There was clear evidence of a widely available, intoxicant turning perfectly ordinary human beings into potential killers, unleashing aggression on a murderous scale. Yet no one bothered to question its contribution to violence, the pernicious effect it can have on young people, or the chemistry that turns a jolly drunk into an aggressive lout. The demon drink, that menace to society that so obsessed the legislators and moralisers of the Victorian era, seems to have become just another aspect of modern life. Like it or lump it. Indeed, so accustomed are we to that most companionable of drugs that the Government feels able to suggest that we can drink a little more, that alcohol can have a beneficial effect on our health.

Why do we so readily tolerate drink while remaining so implacably hostile to other drugs? It is not hard to imagine the headlines and column inches which would have resulted if, say, the soldiers had been high on LSD, or the boys had been smoking cannabis. The response would have been immediate and horrified, with MPs pressing for new regulations, police launching all-out war on the pushers, and leader columns inveighing against the perils that beset modern youth.

The tragic case of Leah Betts, the teenager who died after taking an Ecstasy tablet, led to a national debate about the widespread use of drugs at teenage raves: in Scotland, the illegal use of Temazepam, a sleeping pill

which can cause medical complications, prompted its banning, simply on the ground that it causes "misery and despair in our towns and cities"; a middle-aged lady who grew cannabis for medicinal purposes in an upstairs room was jailed for 18 months, with the judge cautioning against the hazards of such antisocial behaviour.

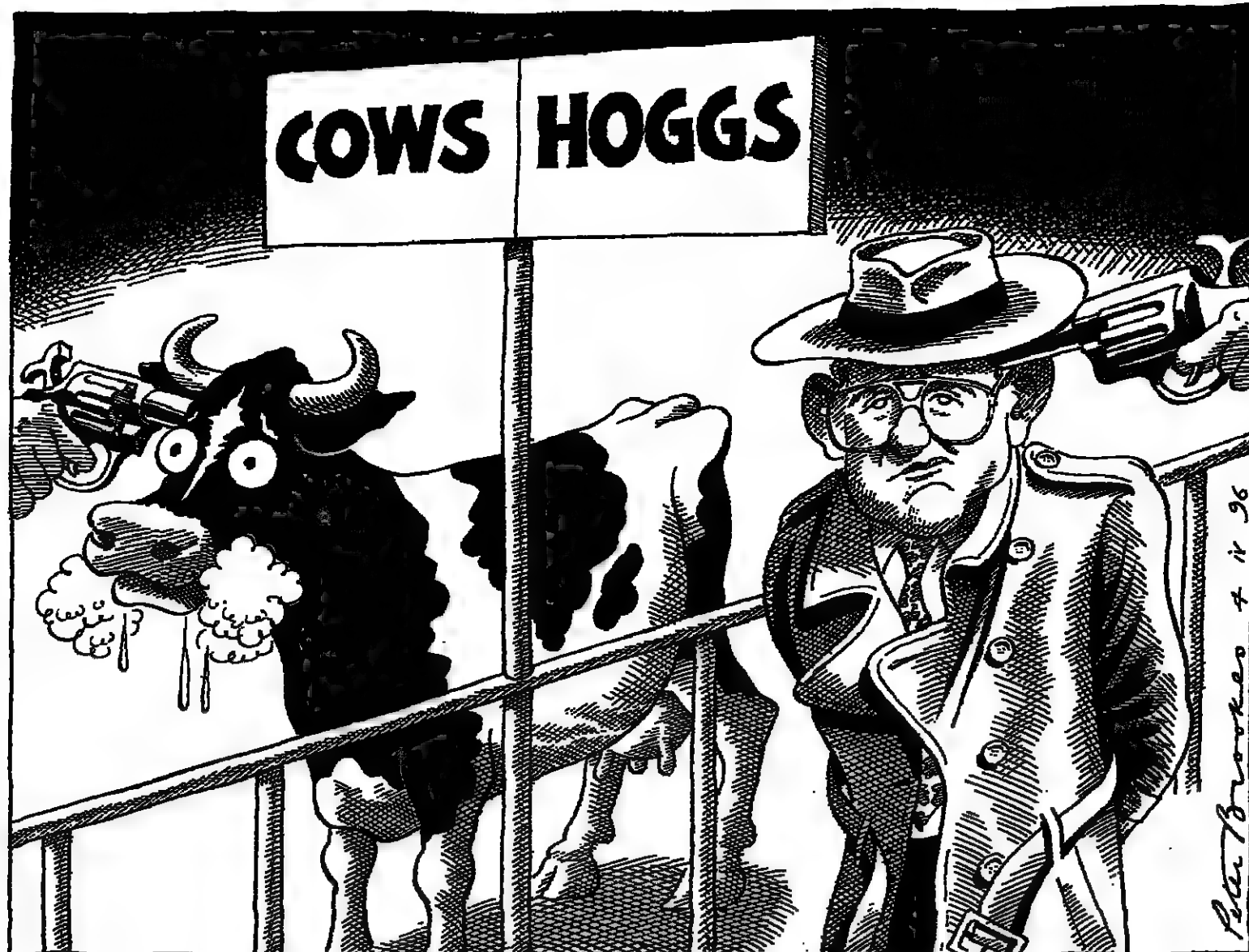
The gap in attitudes cannot just be put down to drugs being more dangerous than alcohol. Drink, after all, is a factor in 70 per cent of homicides, 43 per cent of assaults and 82 per cent of disorder cases. For all the concerns about drug-induced crime waves, nothing that heroin or cocaine induce can compare with statistics such as these. Nor can it be said that more deaths are caused by drug addiction than by alcoholism. Deaths associated with alcohol far outstrip those related to drug abuse. At the same time, alcohol consumption among young people is growing far faster than that of drugs.

In his 1960s study, *Narcotic Addiction in Britain and America*, Edwin Shur made a depressingly simple observation. There was, he said, no basic difference between the two addictions. They had similarities in cause and effect. However, society had accepted one and not the other. "In both Britain and America," he wrote, "the use of alcohol is a widely approved form of social behaviour."

We are used to it. It is part of our social fabric. We know, or we think we know, all about its pernicious effects but in the end we prefer what Seamus Heaney called "swimming towards the lure of warm-lit places" to dabbling with the bleak uncertainty of drugs.

And there, in the end, is the real distinction. Alcohol equals familiarity. Drugs equal fear. We fear drugs because we do not fully understand them. We see in them the source of a deep corruption which gnaws at the foundations of society, which alienates young people, and undermines traditional values. To most of us there is nothing "companionable" about drugs; they are a symbol of hostility and rejection. It is this fear which precludes sensible public debate about drugs and their legal status. Any talk of relaxing the law or reassessing our attitudes is considered political suicide. Clare Short was firmly slapped down by Tony Blair for daring even to suggest that it might be a suitable matter for discussion. Even the Liberal Democrats raise it at conferences.

This is absurd. No one is seriously proposing the reintroduction of prohibition to combat abuse of drink. Nor would it be sensible to lift all restrictions on the use of hard drugs. But to tolerate the one unquestioningly while consigning the other to forbidden territory resolves nothing. They are sides of the same coin. Understanding the one might help to resolve the issues raised by the other.



A question of Europe

The single currency would spell death for many British jobs

John Major has got it right. The decision on a referendum is the best that has been made by the Government in a long time. It has not been easy, but that makes it all the sweeter. Kenneth Clarke resisted and bargained to the end, but the actual decision has not made any unacceptable concession to him. John Major has avoided the fatal trap of letting Mr Clarke appear the strongest figure in his Cabinet. But that is almost the least of the benefits.

The Prime Minister has now drawn a line below British policy on the single European currency, and made it depend on the consent of the British public. Had he done the same thing during the Maastricht negotiations, his position then would have been much stronger. Chancellor Kohl uses the political strength of Germany in a ruthless way to impose his European policies on the Cabinets and Parliaments of his European partners. These German pressures are powerful, but they are not going to overawe the British people. From now on, any currency decision not acceptable to the British electorate will not be accepted by Britain. That is a safeguard, but also a negotiating advantage.

The referendum decision also confirms and extends the constitutional doctrine which was established in that enjoyable Maastricht case. "The Queen v the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, ex parte the Rt Hon the Lord Rees-Mogg, 1993". The costs of that case were paid by Sir James Goldsmith, who has also played a noble part in the campaign for a referendum. The High Court followed the ancient precedent in accepting that "the Government could not lawfully transfer any part of the Crown's prerogative powers in relation to foreign affairs without statutory enactment". The Government cannot use the prerogative power to alienate any part of the prerogative power. The referendum expands this constitutional doctrine because it accepts the principle that the Government cannot properly use the power of Parliament to alienate the power of Parliament, in a permanent way, without the consent of the people. The whips cannot vote away our liberties without our consent.

John Major has also outmanoeuvred Tony Blair, or at least Tony Blair has outmanoeuvred himself. He now has to decide whether to bring Labour referendum policy into

line with the Government's, which would at best be a tactical humiliation, or to stay with his present unsatisfactory commitment. Labour's present policy is to obtain public consent to a single currency either by way of a referendum or in a general election. Obviously a general election, in which the currency question would be mixed with many other issues, would be an extremely bad way of seeking public consent.

In practice it has now become almost unthinkable that a Labour government, if elected, would take Britain into a single currency without a referendum. That would split the Labour Party and unite, or almost unite, the Tories and the Liberal Democrats. Tony Blair finds himself at present stranded in a position which is damaging to him in Opposition, and will be even more damaging in Government. It is his first big mistake, and he would do well to put it right as soon as possible. He can no more afford to give Gordon Brown a veto on his European policy than John Major could afford to give it to Kenneth Clarke.

In present circumstances, there would be no majority in Britain for joining a single currency. Of course, those circumstances could change, and if the British public after full debate, does want to join a single currency at some future date, that will be their decision. But such a decision would require a very different Europe, a Europe which solved rather than creating problems for Britain, a Europe of low costs, high competitiveness and low unemployment. This week's meeting of the Group of Seven countries in Lille showed how far Europe is from such a state of affairs.

In the business section of Tuesday's *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, one of the great newspapers of Europe, there was a table showing the January unemployment levels of the G7 countries. Japan was lowest with only 3.4 per cent; the US had 5.7; UK, 8.4; Germany, 8.6; Canada, 9.5; France, 12.0 and Italy, 12.5. These are

very bad figures for continental Europe, all the worse as each country has a further band of concealed unemployment among trainees and those who have retired early. No wonder that *Le Figaro*, on the same day, commented that "this situation will become explosive if it persists". In France, a social explosion means riots in the streets of Paris.

In the whole European Union, the attempt to meet the Maastricht convergence criteria for a single currency is having a deflationary effect. Not since the early 1930s has a group of countries in the world experienced a period of high unemployment and economic stagnation. Europe has also lost growth and competitiveness compared to Asia: in the past ten years the Pacific tiger economies have doubled in size, while the continental European economies have grown by only about a quarter.

The French were the hosts at the Lille conference and largely set the agenda. President Chirac called for a third way between the open market Anglo-American economies and the social market economies of the European model; his third way turned out to have very little in it that was Anglo-American. Despite American objections, the communiqué reaffirmed the old European attitudes, and committed the G7 countries to more deflationary budgets, to "modernising" the regulation of goods and services, and to promoting "security of employability" rather than mobility of labour. These social market policies have produced Europe's unemployment rate of over 11 per cent. The single currency would cement this high unemployment in place and extend it to Britain. It would make Euro-sclerosis incurable.

French attitudes are swinging even further towards what could be called a social fortress Europe. The leading article in *Le Figaro* which rightly warns of a potential explosion if unemployment continues to rise also gives characteristic French remedies: higher tariffs, less investment in

competitive countries, making trade conditional on the social welfare expenditure of other countries, and fixed exchange rates. "In order to save jobs [in Europe], it is the world that has to be changed."

Without a commitment to a referendum, Britain might have been taken into such a Europe, for which the single currency would be an essential condition, against the wishes of the British people. We might have been sandbagged. Once trapped, it might have been very hard to get out, at least without leaving the European Union altogether. Yet this social fortress Europe has no chance of success; it offers nothing but high costs, high taxes, low growth, high unemployment and economic decline, all of which are only too evident in the continental Europe of the 1990s. This was the British disease of our socialist period, when a relatively open-market Continent was growing so much faster than us; it is now the German disease, the French disease, the Spanish disease, the European disease in general.

The latest trends show that the prospect for European unemployment is actually worsening. The European Commission for Monetary Affairs, Yves-Thibault de Silguy, announced this week that the OECD was lowering its forecast for growth in 1996. The forecast for the first half of this year has been reduced from 2.0 to 1.5 per cent, well below the level of stable employment. European ministers attack the commitment of the Anglo-Americans to competitiveness and labour mobility, but the United States has been responsible for a very large part of the job creation in the G7 countries, in contrast to the export of jobs from Germany. Britain's unemployment has been falling while the European average was rising.

What about the Labour Party? What about Tony Blair? Of course, some parts of the social fortress policy are attractive to Labour, Tony Blair has a constituency, part of which would like a protected, high-cost, high-welfare labour market. But will Labour pay the price of becoming the high-unemployment party, and would people vote for them if they did? A single European currency adopted without a referendum is an issue on which Labour could still lose the next election. "Vote Labour and lose your job" would not make a good election slogan, yet the single currency would be death for British jobs as it is already proving for French.

Buttercup knows best

Heed the wisdom of the cow, says Paul Heiney

With 15,000 beasts a week about to be flung on the bonfire, it is time to look at the beef crisis from the cow's point of view. When it comes to making milk and meat, cows know best: and although Buttercup has warned us often enough during the past decade, we have ignored the signs which were all too plainly telling us that she thought things were not right.

Those who have been lucky enough in their lives to have kept cows (as I have until quite recently) know them to be benign, benevolent and reserved creatures. Other cultures have worshipped them, and if you have spent any time with your head next to the warm flank of the cow while drawing milk from her udder, it is not difficult to see why. Cows are good friends.

And in return for their generosity, how have we thanked them? We have made them our current public enemy number one. But that is just one of a catalogue of crimes committed against the modern dairy cow. Ask vets who attend highly efficient herds. They will tell you of lameness, oversized udders, illness due to stress. The modern dairy cow works so hard for her (until recently, poisoned) rations that she is, literally, knackered after four or five years. Under less pressure she could be productive into her teens. Now, with the beef crisis all her fault too, we bestow the final indignity upon her: a parting shot from the slaughterman's gun before throwing her to the flames.

To ensure this shameful episode is never repeated, we must humbly and apologetically turn to the cow and ask her what kind of life she would like to lead. My guess is that she wants to work under a tightly controlled system, with regular inspections, rules about the contents of her feed and how much time she must spend at grass: strict rules too about how long her calves must suckle, and how they are subsequently fattened for beef.

She must no longer be used as a veterinary pin cushion — except when she is unwell — and never routinely given drugs "just in case". Milk her, yes, but do not milk her for all she has got. Let her live a full working life, as cows used to. This system of farming is called organic, and not only cows but consumers need it now as they have never before.

At this point, modern farmers groan. To them this is as tactless as whispering "mineral water" to a drunk. They mumble about loss of yields, world shortages of food, diseased crops, as if they had all the answers to these problems. The demand for wholesome food, they will tell us, patronisingly, is no more than a niche market. What British agriculture, more than any other in Europe, has failed to recognise is that organic farming is no longer a hobby practised by men in beards and sandals, living up mountains, knitting wholesome socks. Almost 10 per cent of German farms are now organic, compared to a mere 0.3 per cent here. Organic farming is based upon modern science backed by international but underfunded research, and on the deeply moral principle that the only way to farm now and for the future is by working with the principles of nature and not against them.

But there will be a price to pay. And although it has been easy so far to nod in agreement, you must now decide whether or not you are prepared to pay for this. Organic farming yields less milk, meat, cereal and vegetables, because it is less exploitative. At this point the modern agriculturalist will mutter, "less efficient" — but we have seen where his efficiency has got us. If meat becomes more expensive and we return to the day when a chicken was a treat worth waiting for, and a joint of beef a celebration, where would be the harm in that? No one is going to die for the want of a cheap cut of beef. Some nutritionists argue we would be the healthier for better beef, eaten less often.

If it is still thought that cheap milk is necessary for children's health, let us spend money subsidising organic milk for poorer families' sake. For those who do not like beef, nor care much about children's health, it could be regarded as a subsidy for the traditional fields and meadows which make the countryside pleasant. Cattle like them too; it has to be better than being reared in a dark barn.

It seems likely that the health risk from eating beef has been very small. That it has caused such panic out of all proportion to the risk is a symptom of a deep mistrust of the practices of modern farming and food production, and throwing thousands of old cows to the flame will do little to change this. Do not fall for any of the slick slogans with which the supermarkets will be bombarding us in the coming weeks. They mean very little. Ignore the "farm-fresh", the "traditionally reared", anything with the devalued word "natural" in it, and instead look for the Organic symbol. It is the one that has Buttercup's vote.

Yahoo's over

DANDRUFF is flying among the Young Conservatives over a broadside written by one of their own. Writing in *Crossbow*, the rag of the influential right-wing Bow Group, Martin Ball, a former editor of the YCs' *Campaigner* magazine, calls for the dissolution of the Young Conservatives. His critique is likely to earn approval at the highest party levels, where the YCs have become rather a trial.

"The YCs should be abolished forthwith," writes Ball, a former leader of the Nottingham Young Conservatives. "It was once a great

organisation, with considerable impact and enormous influence. Time's up, and the curtain should be gracefully brought down."

In a previous issue of *Crossbow*, Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary and former chairman of the Bow Group, wrote of the threat of domination of the YCs by hardcore activists and of their becoming too single-minded.

Signs of decline were obvious at last year's YC ball at the party conference in Blackpool, and this year Central Office refused to fund their annual conference. Michael

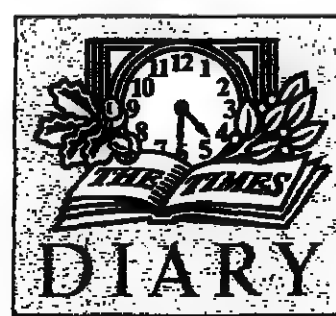
Heseltine was heckled in Blackpool by rightwingers fiercely opposed to the EU, while the highlight of the evening was a tawdry "Saturday Night Fever" dance-off. The days of YC tennis parties and decorous dinner dances are clearly long gone.

There is a strut about Lord St John of Fawley. Is it on account of his re-election yesterday to the chair of the Royal Fine Arts Commission? Or could it be due to his continuing friendship with Princess Margaret? I spotted the pair gossiping away on Tuesday night at the National Theatre, where they sat through Schiller's *Mary Stuart*.

Gulp? Glug!

THERE'S something of a sinking feeling among Boat Race crews this year. Mike Sweeney, the chairman of Henley Royal Regatta, is umpiring once again, but his record is troubled.

He has been an umpire four times before: only once, in 1988, have the waters been smooth. On the first occasion, in 1984, Cambridge ploughed into a barge and the race had to be postponed for 24 hours. In 1986, there was chaos when the Cambridge boat and its following flotilla struggled to hold



their positions when Oxford were late reaching the stake-boat. Then in 1990, equipment broke in the Oxford boat five minutes before the start, which was badly delayed.

Even as Cambridge president in the 1960s, "Sinker" Sweeney made headlines when his crew almost drowned and the boat was smashed up in training by a freak squall. "The potential for disaster is enormous," he says.

Rock-like

ROMAN Catholics in Gibraltar are on the march. The only supermarket on the rock, Safeway, is for the first time ever to open on Good Friday, a decision which the Catholic Bishop of Gibraltar, Bernard Devlin, has called "an affront" to Christians. Even the Church of England, never known to take a

stand when buckling under pressure is easier, is supporting a boycott of the store.

Yates trouble

PAULA YATES has received an extraordinary offer from her estranged husband, Bob Geldof, in response to stories of her penury. She is under threat of eviction from her Clapham home; mortgage arrears are mounting; she has three kids and is expecting her fourth by her lover Michael Hutchence.

Geldof has suggested that Paula and the kids should move back into

her old Chelsea home with himself and his French girlfriend Jeanne Marlene. Even Paula couldn't cope with such a ménage. "I don't think it would be healthy for anyone, least of all the kids."

Selective quote

LET'S HOPE that Ian Botham is elected as an England cricket selector, for it should lead to some humbling selection meetings.

For although he was the consummate diplomat yesterday, breezily talking of his cordial relationship with the selectors' chairman, Raymond Illingworth, his autobiography paints an altogether different relationship.

Botham wrote that the decision to make Illingworth chairman "almost defied belief". He referred to him and his cronies as "senior citizens" and "the Sanatogen Set", and wrote: "Here was a man aged 61, whose only contact with players under 50 years old was from his seat in the press box or the television commentary position, where he had managed to spend the best part of the previous ten years contradicting himself by criticising their efforts one minute, then praising them the next."



"It might have been wise to drop the 'Beefy' nickname"

P.H.S



Young Conservatives embarrassing their elders

Cattle feed connection to people with 'mad cow' disease?

Yours sincerely,
JUDY ASTLEY.
2 The Embankment,
Twickenham, Middlesex.
April 1.

NEWS

Yard foils £5m kidnapping

A Greek shipping magnate told how he feared for his life as he was kept blindfold and drugged in a cupboard for nine days by armed kidnappers demanding a £5 million ransom.

George Fraghista, who had been abducted close to his London home on March 24, was found after a huge police operation that led to the arrest of four men. He was "very disturbed, worried, upset and frightened". Page 1

Ministers attack 'unhelpful' Europe

Ministers attacked Britain's "unhelpful" European partners for refusing to lift the worldwide ban on beef products as the Government confirmed plans for a selective slaughter of 4.6 million older cattle. Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, threatened to take legal action over the "unjustified" European Union ban on British beef. Pages 1, 2

Sentencing reform

Michael Howard unveiled the most far-reaching sentencing reforms this century and promised tough American-style prison terms for persistent burglars and offenders convicted of repeated violence. Pages 1, 8, 9

Croatian air crash

An aircraft carrying Ron Brown, the American Commerce Secretary and a delegation of American industrialists crashed in stormy weather off the Croatian port of Dubrovnik. Page 1

Teachers' demand

The most moderate of the big teaching unions issued a near-unanimous demand for the Government's school inspection system to be scrapped. Page 2

Woolwich crisis

The £3 billion stock market flotation of the Woolwich Building Society has been put in jeopardy by the departure of Peter Robinson, its chief executive. Page 1

Round-world arrests

A British couple in their sixties appealed for help after the Eritrean navy interrupted their 13-year circumnavigation of the globe by boarding their yacht and putting them under house arrest. Page 5

Baby allowed to die

A baby will have her life-support machine switched off to end what a judge called "almost living death". Page 6

Dial KO for knock-out

Hong Kong police are blaming a rising number of knock-out punches on the mobile phone. With one in six adults now carrying a phone, hardly a week goes by without someone suffering a cordless crack across the head. "You could say it's the weapon of choice," said Ray Pierce, the deputy district commander of Mong Kok police station. Page 17

Fast funerals

Mourners should no longer expect a hearse to be driven at a respectful speed or even stick to the 30mph limit, the funeral ombudsman said. Page 10

No 'Gulf disease'

A study of nearly 19,000 Americans who suffered a variety of illnesses after serving in the Gulf conflict found no evidence of Gulf War syndrome. Page 13

Hitler's orders

A former SS captain accused of organising a Nazi massacre of Italians during the Second World War said that the atrocity was ordered by Hitler. Page 14

Ukraine support

John Major will spend a day in Ukraine before arriving in Moscow for the nuclear safety summit. His talks are intended as a signal that Britain is committed to a free Ukraine. Page 15

Neo-Nazis jailed

Five leaders of South Africa's neo-Nazi Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB) were each sentenced to an effective 26 years' imprisonment for their roles in a bombing campaign. Page 16

Arab fears

Arab states will be crippled by instability and a worsening crisis of identity unless entrenched rulers increase political freedom, according to a senior British diplomat. Page 17



Devon Tory MPs (from left) Sir Peter Emery (Honiton), Gary Streeter (Plymouth, Sutton), Anthony Sten (South Hams), Dame Janet Fookes (Plymouth, Drake), demonstrating their support for the British beef industry at lunch yesterday

BUSINESS

Northern Rock windfall: A share windfall is in store for 1.3 million savers and 250,000 borrowers at the building society which plans to convert into a bank. Page 25

Oil jobs: Hundreds of jobs have been saved at Harland and Wolff after the yard announced that it has won a £100 million order to build the world's largest floating oil production vessel for BP. Page 25

Granada: The new owner of Forte, has abruptly parted company with two of the most senior executives at Forte's hotels, most of which are earmarked for disposal. Page 25

Markets: The FT-SE 100 fell 3.4 to 3725.1. Sterling fell from 83.5 to 83.4 after a rise from \$1.244 to \$1.261 but a drop from DM2.259 to DM2.251. Page 28

SPORT

Cricket: Alan Lee says the election of Ian Botham, the people's favourite, as an England selector would not resurrect the national team's fortunes. Page 48

Golf: Colin Montgomerie leads the European task force warming up for the Masters next week by taking on the Americans in the BellSouth Classic. Page 42

Rowing: As the Boat Race build-up continues, John Bryant argues that the magic would be destroyed by any further moves towards "cheque-book rowing". Page 46

Rugby league: London Broncos play their first home match of the Super League campaign when they take on Paris Saint-Germain at The Valley, the home of Charlton Athletic, tonight. Page 44

ARTS

Small triumph: Made on a shoe-string budget, Gillies MacKinnon's *Small Faces* superbly evokes a boyhood on the tough streets of 1960s Glasgow. Page 35

Bright new dramatist: The Bush Theatre in London "has discovered yet another striking dramatist who only a few years ago was bouncing about his playpen," writes Benedict Nightingale of the 26-year-old Samuel Adamson. Page 36

Penguins for pennies: Today, Penguin Books publishes its first sampler of children's classics at 60p each. Page 37

Wonderful Copenhagen: A magnificent new museum will be one lasting legacy of Copenhagen's year as "Cultural Capital of Europe". Page 37

Island wrangler: Lord McAlpine explains the dispute between two brothers who are realising a childhood dream and the man who is a law unto himself on Sark. Page 19

BODY AND MIND

Prozac pooches: Giles Coren on a book providing cures for blanket-sucking in dachshunds. Page 18

All-conquering: Extract of horse chestnut is seen to cure chronic venous insufficiency, a build-up of fluid in the legs. Page 18

TRAVEL

Perfect paros: Holiday villages are enjoying a boom but guests want interesting locations as well as indoor facilities. Page 40

Tomorrow's wild: Paignton zoo in Devon is undergoing a £6 million transformation into an environmental theme park. Page 41

BOOKS

A.S. Byatt on Doris Lessing's novel: a maddening tale of erotic obsession; Daniel Johnson on the lives of Thomas Mann; and a look at the myth of Pandora. Pages 38, 39

THE PAPERS

About 160,000 residents of Hong Kong lined up this week to get a British National Overseas passport. What do these people know that the rest of the world ought to? — *Wall Street Journal*

TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

FASHION
New York's newest: Iain R. Webb on the best of American style

PLUS ...
Valerie Grove meets Michael Palin; David Sinclair interviews the country rock star Steve Earle

TIMES WEATHERCALL

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Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambs 707
West Midlands & Shropshire 708
Stratford, Warwick & Wore 709
Central Midlands 710
East Midlands 711
Lincoln & Humberside 712
Dorset & Poole 713
Wiltshire & Dorset 714
W & S Yorks & Derbys 715
N & E England 716
Cumbria & Lake District 717
S & W Scotland 718
W & N Scotland 719
E & S Scotland 720
E & S Scotland & Borders 721
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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

THURSDAY APRIL 4 1996



A welder at the Harland & Wolff shipyard works on a section of the BP vessel. The yard has won a £100 million contract, confirmed yesterday

Hundreds of jobs saved as BP project wins go-ahead

By NICHOLAS WATT AND CARL MORTISHED

HUNDREDS of jobs will be saved in Northern Ireland after BP received the go-ahead by the Department of Trade and Industry for a new oil development. The £900 million development of the Schiehallion oilfield is part of the huge frontier oil province in the Atlantic, west of Shetland and Orkney.

The project will save the jobs at Harland & Wolff after the Belfast shipyard announced yesterday that it had won a £100 million order to build the world's largest floating oil production vessel.

The Schiehallion development will include a satellite field, Loyal, jointly owned by BP and Shell, which has reserves of 85 million barrels of oil. Together, the two fields have recoverable reserves of 425 million barrels. BP anticipates peak production from the fields of 142,000 bpd.

BP said yesterday that UK companies would account for 80 per cent of the development work. Atlantic Frontier Alliance, which has been awarded the contract and includes Brown and Root, Harland & Wolff, Single Buoy Mooring and Coffey Stena, will design and build a £400 million floating production storage and offloading vessel (FPSO) capable of storing 900,000 barrels of oil.

The development will involve 29 seabed wells in four clusters with oil flowing through subsea pipelines and risers into the FPSO. The vessel will be permanently stationed at sea and a shuttle operation will transport the oil every four to six days. BP said tankers could transport oil directly to Rotterdam or to terminals at Sullom Voe or Flotta.

The go-ahead for Schiehallion, one of the largest developments to be announced in the last decade, comes after the opening of the Foinaven oilfield in the same area, which is expected to commence production this year at the rate of 80,000 barrels per day.

Harland & Wolff, which has been losing millions of pounds a year, now hopes to become a world leader in the construction of the floating oil rigs.

Harland & Wolff has already started work on the hull of the vessel. The turret and topside, which are being built on the mainland, will be shipped to Belfast where the £400 million vessel will be fitted out by Harland & Wolff.

Tim Eggar, Minister for Industry and Energy, who approved the development of the Schiehallion oilfield, said he was delighted that Harland & Wolff had won the order to build the oil production vessel. Speaking at the shipyard yesterday, Mr Eggar paid tribute to Harland & Wolff's workforce and to Per Nielsen, its chief executive.

He said that the shipyard's difficulties in the future would be in scheduling new orders, rather than in trying to win them.

Mr Nielsen said that up to 800 new jobs could be created at the shipyard if it wins further orders to build FPSOs. Asked whether the latest order would mean the yard would break even, he said: "We feel now that the situation has emerged where things can start to be a little more bright."

The announcement at Harland & Wolff came as workers at the neighbouring Shorts plant protested against compulsory job losses in the wake of the collapse of Fokker. Shorts said that there would be 300 compulsory redundancies on top of about 200 voluntary redundancies. A further 540 temporary workers on fixed-term contracts have been sacked.

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FT-SE 100	3725.1	(-3.4)
Yield	3.72%	
FT-SE All share	1855.89	(-0.01)
Nikkei	21464.73	(-135.35)
Dow Jones	5566.82	(-5.05)
S&P Composite	653.77	(-1.49)

US RATE		
Federal Funds	5 1/4%	(5 1/4%)
Long Bond	9 1/4%	(9 1/4%)
Yield	8.55%	(8.55%)

LONDON MONEY		
3-month interbank	8%	(8 1/4%)
Life long gilt	100%	(105%)
Future (Jun)	100%	(105%)

STERLING		
New York	1.5252	(1.5243)
London	1.5252	(1.5243)
Frankfurt	1.5251	(1.5244)
Paris	1.5251	(1.5244)
FF	7.6990	(7.7035)
DM	1.8210	(1.8192)
Yen	162.25	(163.88)
Index	85.4	(85.3)

DOLLAR		
London	1.4792	(1.4834)
FF	8.0400	(8.0579)
DM	1.1940	(1.1858)
Yen	106.30	(107.81)
Index	85.4	(85.3)

Tokyo close Yen 107.13		
NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Jun)	\$18.85	(\$19.00)
GOLD		
London close	\$394.96	(\$394.75)
* denotes midday trading price		

Northern Rock plans flotation bonanza

By PATRICIA TEHAN AND ROBERT MILLER

NORTHERN ROCK, Britain's eighth largest building society, has announced plans to turn itself into a bank with a £1 billion market capitalisation next year, saying it will refuse to consider takeover approaches from third parties.

The float will mean an average £1,000 free share giveaway to its one million qualifying members.

Robert Dickinson, the chairman, said the move was intended to keep predators at bay. He said the society had not received takeover approaches from third parties and would not be prepared to consider them should it do so.

He rejected the suggestion that by seeking to convert to bank status the society was effectively putting itself up for sale and said that if the board received an approach it would refuse to put any deal to its 1.3 million members.

Northern Rock decided to give up its mutual status after an approach from JP Morgan, the investment bank, last August. JP Morgan suggested an unusually structured move that would help the society to retain its independence, and make it less attractive to potential predators. The society started serious work on the deal, codenamed "Swede" because of similarities with Sweden's Swedbank arrangement, in December.

The society plans to set up a charitable foundation, the Northern Rock Foundation, to support causes mainly in the North East of England.

The new Northern Rock bank plans to agree to covenant 5 per cent of its annual pre-tax profits to the foundation, which based on last year's figures would have been £7 million.

In a defensive move, the foundation will receive non-voting, non-dividend paying shares in the new bank that in

a takeover would convert into 15 per cent of the ordinary share capital of the company.

Many analysts, however, pointed out that there was no defence mechanism against a hostile bidder prior to the society joining the stock market, when it will be protected for five years.

Christopher Sharp, Northern Rock's managing director, said: "I have no doubt that members will endorse this scheme. It not only benefits them, but the wider community."

Mr Dickinson said that by becoming a bank, Northern Rock would escape "restrictive" building society legislation and gain freedom in its capital-raising activities. Leo Finn, deputy managing director, said this would increase freedom for making acquisitions, for instance purchasing mortgage books.

The change of status would also benefit the wider community through the foundation, expressing the society's commitment to the region, said Mr Dickinson, as well as benefiting members through the free share distribution.

He said there were no plans to become an "all singing all dancing" financial services provider, and that the new bank would concentrate on its core mortgage market. It has been seen as an ambitious society, having taken over the North of England Building Society in May 1994.

About 750,000 investing members with at least £50 in their accounts on April 2 and at least £100 on December 31 this year and 250,000 borrowers will qualify for the share giveaway. Although the terms have not yet been finalised, it seems likely that there will be a flat distribution of shares.

Details of the conversion plans will be posted to members early next year and they will be asked to vote on the plans in spring 1997. At least 20 per cent of qualifying members must vote and at least 75 per cent of the votes must be in favour of the deal.

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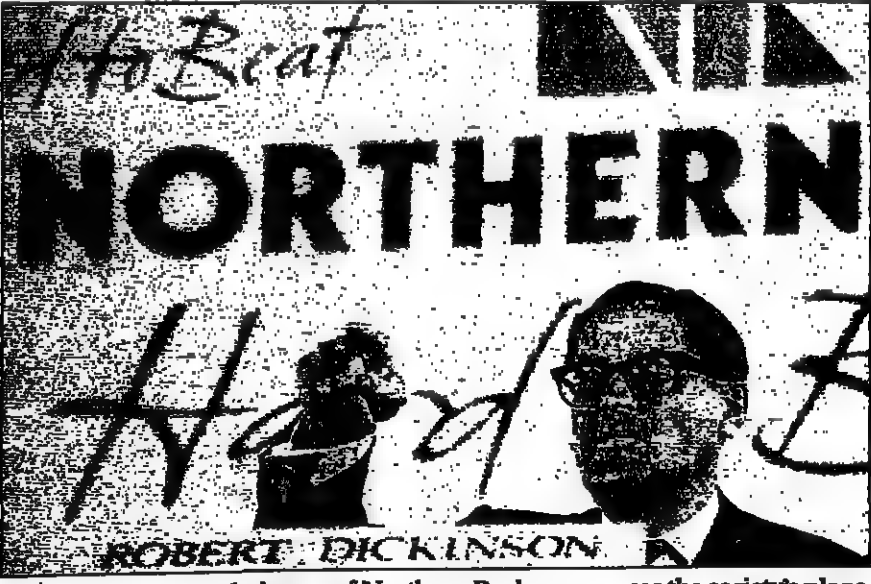
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Interest-free mortgage offer

WEST BROMWICH, another building society widely seen as a bid target, yesterday underlined the cut-throat nature of the mortgage market when it launched what is believed to be the first interest-free home loan.

A discount equivalent to the society's base rate, currently 7.25 per cent, is offered for the first six months of a loan, followed by a discount of 2 per cent for a further six months.

The offer is available on mortgages and remortgages of up to 75 per cent of the purchase price. The society said it had already received a large number of enquiries from borrowers. Pennington, page 27



Robert Dickinson, chairman of Northern Rock, announces the society's plans

Two Forte hotel chiefs check out

By MARTIN WALLER

GRANADA GROUP, the new owner of the Forte group, has abruptly parted company with two of the most senior executives at Forte's hotels business, much of which is earmarked for disposal under plans made at the time of the £3.9 billion takeover.

Randolph Guthrie, former managing director of international business at Meridien and Exclusive, the two upmarket chains that are up for sale, has departed after a disagreement with Granada over a shake-up of the business to be announced shortly.

He is now on holiday, and talks have yet to start on compensation terms. Mr Guthrie's departure has come as a surprise to the City, which had been expecting Granada to make efforts to keep the old management team in place before any sale. Also leaving is Richard Carrick, marketing director for the entire hotels division. He has quit for "personal and family reasons", according to Granada.

A recent arrival at Forte from Airtours, the package holiday business, he has decided not to relocate his family from the north of England now the company is under new ownership. He is not thought to be in any hurry to leave.

Granada had said it would be selling the upmarket Forte hotels, but executives have indicated privately recently that they are in no hurry to clinch a deal. One possible buyer is Sir Rocco Forte, former chairman at Forte, who is putting together the finances for an approach.

Pennington, page 27

City regards rate cut as outside bet

By JANET BUSH ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

KENNETH CLARKE, the Chancellor, and Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, yesterday held their monthly meeting on interest rates, with the City seeing a further rate cut as an outside bet.

They met late in the afternoon, instead of the morning, because of Mr Clarke's engagements relating to the Cabinet decision to put a referendum on a single currency in an election manifesto. The Bank's first chance to signal a change in rates would be in its usual money market operations today at about 9.30am.

Most economists believe that, having cut rates by a quarter point in three of the last four meetings, Mr Clarke and Mr George may want to wait to see whether manufacturing joins consumer spending on an upward trend.

Clash over report on Lloyd's plan

By JON ASHWORTH

LOYD'S of London receives a resounding endorsement in an independent report to be published today. But the names' representative who commissioned the report on the reconstruction and renewal (R&R) plan has refused to sign it off, stirring fresh controversy at Lime Street.

Alan Porter, deputy chairman of the Lloyd's Names Associations' Working Party, claims Slaughter and May's critique of the R&R plan falls short of its objectives. His refusal to endorse the 80-page report brings him into conflict with Sir David Berriman and Damon de Lario, fellow members of the Validation Steering Group, both of whom commend the report's conclusions.

The report, copies of which are expected to be sent to names today, concludes that

no name would be better off if Lloyd's were to go into run-off. Without R&R, names would have no finality, no end to litigation, no assistance from the central fund, and would be likely to face immediate cash calls. It also confirms that Equitas will offer names more certain "finality" than was recently thought possible.

Mr Porter said the report's terms of reference bore little resemblance to those originally proposed. However, Sir David said it confirmed Lloyd's was on the right track.

Separately, the Association of Lloyd's Names has called on Lloyd's to put plans by Murray Lawrence, a managing agency, to merge seven syndicates from the beginning of 1997 on hold until permission has been sought from syndicate members.



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Building industry welcomes change in bids for projects

BY JANET BUSH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE construction industry yesterday welcomed new Treasury guidelines on the procurement of projects under the umbrella of the Private Finance Initiative, aimed at cutting the cost of bidding and speeding up the flow of deals by setting out a clear framework of best practice.

Martin Laing, chairman of the Construction Industry Employers Council which has been highly critical of the logistics of the PFI rather than the concept, said that he was pleased that the Government had listened to so many of the construction industry's suggestions, but urged that the new guidelines be implemented properly to accelerate the number of projects getting under way.

The guidelines were announced yesterday by Michael Jack, Financial Secretary to the Treasury. They include naming departmental champions — usually the minister — who are given the responsibility of seeing projects through; the publication of indicative timetables for each project; inviting no more than three or four bidders to produce full tenders rather than the eight or nine often invited now; the writing

of model contract clauses by the Treasury to prevent having to reinvent clauses for each project.

The CBI also welcomed the news. Adair Turner, CBI Director-General, said: "The PFI vehicle has had difficulty so far in gathering speed. The new guidelines will help to move it up a gear, putting the right people — ministers — in the driving seat."

Mr Jack yesterday said that £4.76 billion of deals under PFI have now been agreed and announced. A further £300 million of hospital projects have now got an identified preferred bidder and are yet to be announced. On top of this, he has identified a further £330 million of examples of imminent projects such as the extension of the Docklands Light Railway and a British Museum Support building. He said that the Government had therefore reached 95 per cent of the £5 billion in projects which was its target.

The PFI is a scheme designed to bring private sector money into infrastructure building projects and share public risk with private companies.

Pennington, page 27

Finance sector bullish

FINANCIAL services businesses are, on average, more optimistic about the immediate future than at any time in the past two years. This optimism is, however, based on plans to cut jobs, so as to trim costs, as well as on hopes that business will rise (Graham Seaford writes).

The CBI/Coopers & Lybrand quarterly financial services survey for March shows a balance of 33 per cent more optimistic than three months ago. A balance of 59 per cent see business volumes rising this quarter. A balance of 36 per cent expect to cut payrolls, with 46 per cent aiming to, against only 10 per cent expecting net recruitment.

Pennington, page 27



Jurek Piasecki is concerned over Signet's lack of response

Bass 'will need £300m' for takeover

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY AND GREEK MORPETH

BASS will need to pay about £300 million to acquire Carlsberg-Tetley, the brewing company, according to industry experts. But there was continuing uncertainty yesterday over the likelihood of a deal, as Bass and Carlsberg and Allied Domecq, Carlsberg-Tetley's joint owners, all refused to comment on reports that they were locked in talks.

Carlsberg said last month that it was not interested in selling its stake. Bass is attracted by the strong Tetley and Carlsberg brands and the opportunity for cost savings. Analysts suggested Bass could save around £75 million a year from merging its brewing interests with Carlsberg-Tetley.

A big hurdle is likely to be the current supply arrangements under which Carlsberg-Tetley supplies beer to the Allied Domecq tied pub estate at relatively high prices compared with the rest of the sector, although the agreement comes up for renewal at the end of the year.

Bass is also likely to face opposition from the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. A deal could also prompt a demerger of Allied Domecq's pub retail and spirits division.

Pennington, page 27

Goldsmiths seeks Jones bid answer

GOLDSMITHS Group, the jeweller where Jurek Piasecki is chairman and chief executive, yesterday complained at the lack of progress with Signet's proposed sale of its H Samuel and Ernest Jones chains (Paul Durman writes).

Signet, the business formerly known as Ratners, put its UK jewellery chains up for sale in January. Goldsmiths, which first declared an interest in buying Ernest Jones three years ago, has submitted its bid, believed to be close to £250 million. Goldsmiths was reporting a 41 per cent increase in annual pre-tax profits to £4.5 million. Sales rose 18 per cent to £62.9 million.

A 3.3p final dividend increases the total 50 pence to 45p.

TOURIST RATES

Bank Buy	Bank Sell
Australia \$	2.06
Austria Sch	16.91
Belgium Fr	48.48
Canada \$	2.178
Cyprus Cyp	0.769
Denmark Kr	9.34
Finland Mk	7.85
France Fr	5.12
Germany DM	4.42
Greece Dr	360.00
Hong Kong \$	12.45
India Ru	1.02
Israel Sh	5.100
Italy Lit	207.00
Japan Yen	177.80
Malay	0.59
Netherlands Gld	2.283
New Zealand \$	2.58
Norway Kr	10.43
Portugal Esc	244.80
S Africa Rd	8.71
Singapore S	197.00
Sweden Kr	10.76
Switzerland Fr	1.98
Taiwan New	119.00
USA \$	1.624

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates are at close of trading yesterday.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Aktiebolaget SKF will be held at SKF Kristinehamn, Byfogdegatan 4, Göteborg, Sweden, at 3.30 p.m. on Thursday April 25, 1996.

Annual General Meeting

Notice of attendance

For the right to participate at the meeting, shareholders must be recorded in the shareholders' register kept by the Securities Register Centre (VPC AB) by Monday April 15, 1996 and must notify the company before noon on Monday April 22, 1996, preferably in writing, otherwise by telephone, of their intention to attend. (AB SKF, S-415 50 Göteborg, Tel. +46 31 37 26 52) giving details of name, address, telephone and registered shareholding. Where representation is being made by proxy, the proxy form shall be sent before the date of the meeting. Shareholders whose shares are registered in the name of a trustee through the Trustee Department of a bank must have the shares registered temporarily in their own name in order to take part in the meeting. Any such re-registration for the purpose of establishing voting rights shall take place by Monday April 15, 1996. This means that the shareholder should give notice of his/her intention to the trustee in plenty of time before that date. A re-registration fee will normally be payable to the trustee.

Agenda

1. Opening of the AGM.
2. Election of chairman of the meeting.
3. Drawing up and approval of register of voters.
4. Election of minutes-checkers.
5. Confirmation that meeting has been correctly called.
6. Presentation of annual report and auditors' report as well as consolidated financial statements and consolidated auditors' reports.
7. Resolution on adoption of the income statements and balance sheets and consolidated income statements and consolidated balance sheets.
8. Resolution that the directors of the board and managing director are discharged from liability.
9. Resolutions regarding distribution of profits.
10. Determination of number of board members and deputy members.
11. Determination of number of auditors and deputy auditors.
12. Determination of directors' fees.
13. Determination of auditors' fees.
14. Election of board members and deputy members.
15. Election of auditors and deputy auditors.
16. Recommendations on amendment to articles of association.

The board recommends the insertion of the following text under § 6 of the articles of association:

"Should the Board decide that a cash issue of 'A' shares and 'B' shares be made, the owners of 'A' and 'B' shares shall have the right to subscribe to new shares of the same type in proportion to the number of shares already held (primary preferential rights). Shares which are not subscribed with primary preferential rights shall be offered to all shareholders for subscription (sub-sidiary preferential rights). If there are insufficient shares to cover such applications according to subsidiary preferential rights, such shares shall be allocated among the shareholders in proportion to the number of shares already held and when this is not possible, through lottery.

Should the Board decide to make a cash issue solely of 'A' or 'B' shares, all shareholders, regardless of whether their holding is of 'A' or 'B' shares, shall have the right to subscribe to the new shares in proportion to their existing holding.

The foregoing shall not imply any limitation of the power to decide on the cash issue with deviation from the shareholders' preferential rights.

By increasing the share capital through a rights issue, new shares will be floated of each type in proportion to the already existing number of shares of the same type. In this context old shares of a given type will carry the right to new shares of the same type. The foregoing shall not imply any limitation of the power through a rights issue of shares, after due changes in the articles of association, to issue shares of a different type."

(The Board's draft resolution has been made since the Swedish Companies Act now prescribes that, companies where shares of different types have been issued, for example with different voting rights, shall include by the end of June, 1996 a stipulation in the articles of association regulating the right to subscribe in connection with new share issues.)

17. Other business

Dividend

The Board of Directors proposes a dividend for the financial year 1995, of 5 kronor 25 öre per share. It is recommended that shareholders with holdings recorded on April 30 1996 be entitled to receive the said dividend. Subject to acceptance by the Annual General Meeting, it is expected that the Securities Register Centre will send out notices of payment to recorded shareholders and listed depositaries on May 8 1996.

Election of Board members

Shareholders, who together represent somewhat more than 60 % of the votes for the total number of Company shares, have informed the Company that they recommend for re-election Ordinary Board Members Anders Scharp, Gösta Bystedt, Mauritz Sahlin, Giovanni Mario Rossignolo, Per-Olof Eriksson, Sune Carlsson, Michael Trechow and Peter Angustsson.

Göteborg, April 1996

Aktiebolaget SKF
(publ)

The Board of Directors

SKF

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Liberty will not raise bid for The Observer

LIBERTY PUBLISHING, formed by Mohamed Al Fayed, the owner of Harrods, to bid for The Observer, said yesterday that it has no intention of increasing its offer and will attempt to buy other media businesses instead.

Liberty, financed entirely by Mr Al Fayed, bid £15 million for The Observer, then raised it last month to £25 million. The Scott Trust, the charitable body which owns The Observer and The Guardian, rejected the higher offer because the paper is not for sale. John Dux, Liberty chief executive, said: "We are not considering increasing the bid. We will wait and see what happens." He would not say which companies Liberty would approach next, but said radio and TV businesses, as well as newspapers, are candidates.

Hewden Stuart warning

HEWDEEN STUART, the plant-hire group, has given warning that trading this year has begun poorly. Severe weather in February delayed work on many construction projects, adding to underlying difficulties. The company believes that the market may not improve for some time and is prepared for continuing pressure on hire rates. Pre-tax profits rose by 4 per cent, to £36.3 million, in the year to January 31. A 2.25p final dividend makes 3p, up 8.3 per cent. The shares fell 9p, to 157p.

Hella grows in UK

GERMANY'S Hella Manufacturing, which makes car light equipment, is to double its UK production, building a £27 million factory and creating up to 300 jobs over the next five years. The company currently employs 200 people at its UK site at Banbury, Oxfordshire, making rear and signal lamps for Jaguar, Rover, Honda, Nissan and Land Rover. The new factory, which is to produce headlamps, will be near the existing site. Work on the first phase should begin this month.

British Coal sells land

MORE THAN 7,200 acres of Scottish farm land is being offered for sale by British Coal, in one of the last asset sales by the former state-owned mining company. The 12 packages, including a mixture of farms, woodland, and upland grazing, are properties that tenants declined to buy when they were offered first refusal. Much of the land was acquired by the company either because of its open-cast mining potential or in relation to underground mining.

PowerGen to build plant

POWERGEN is to build a £100 million combined heat and power (CHP) plant for Brunner Mond, the manufacturer of soda ash and alkali chemicals previously part of ICI. The plant, one of the largest CHP schemes in Britain, will generate 120 megawatts of power and 300-400 megawatts of steam for Brunner's Winnington complex in Cheshire. About 500 jobs will be created during construction of the plant, which is destined to begin operations by 1999.

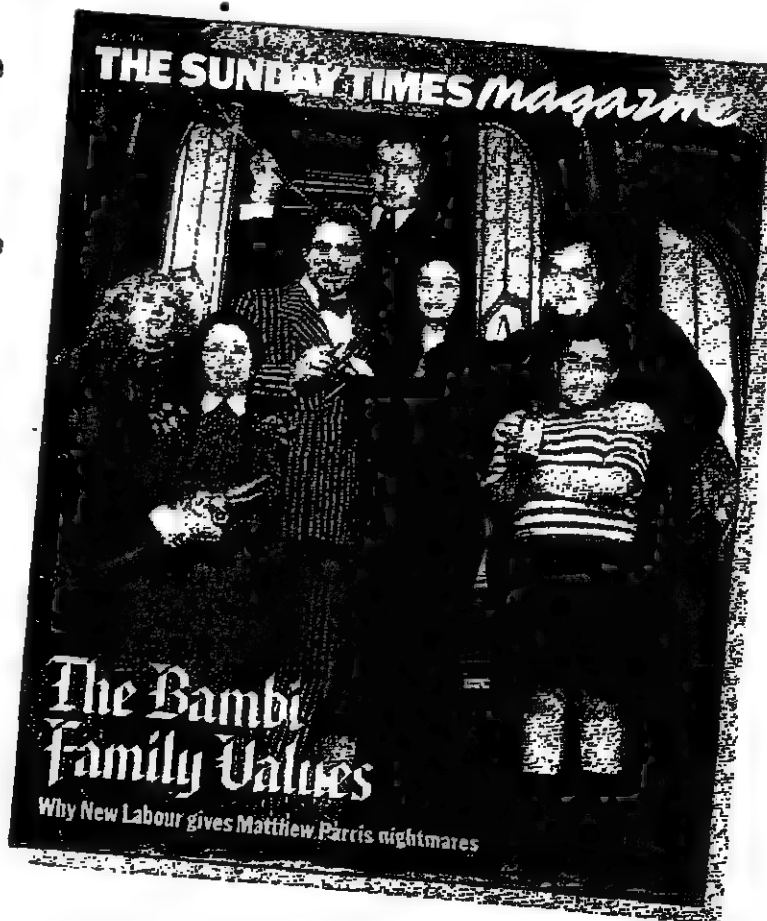
Ready for take-off

THE first Boeing 777-200 to be powered by Rolls-Royce Trent 800 series engines enters service with Thai Airways International next month. The B777, the world's largest twinjet, will be used on regional routes within Asia. The inaugural model will shuttle between Bangkok, Hong Kong, and Seoul. Thai ordered eight 777-200s in June 1991, and has expressed interest in six stretched 777-300s. The B777 has a range of 5,500 miles and seats more than 350 passengers.

THE SUNDAY TIMES

NEW LABOUR'S CREEPY, KOOKY FAMILY

The movie The Addams Family was a parody of the two-kids-and-a-grandma family unit. Mischief was their pleasure but they conformed strangely to the saccharine norm. So it is with Tony and Cherie Blair and their extended family, suggests Matthew Parris who turns his critical wit to cast New Labour as a dynasty out of step. Find out on Sunday, in the Magazine, who among Labour's modernisers the Columnist of the Year likens to Uncle Fester, Lurch and the Addams children, Wednesday and Pugsley



PLUS: TINA TURNER ON TOUR

She's 56 and a grandmother. But far from hanging up her microphone she's turning up the heat. We follow Tina Turner on the eve of her gruelling world tour

THE SUNDAY TIMES IS THE SUNDAY PAPERS

□ The bar to Allied's demerger □ Seller's market for London hotels □ Job cuts the key to financial services optimism

Great Dane in a manger

□ A RATHER cruel analysis note on Allied Domecq last week had the company in the corporate equivalent of negative equity; the break-up value of the dog of the drinks sector is actually less than the current share price.

This may or may not be true, but it is a measure of the market's exasperation with Allied since the last big deal, the £1 billion purchase of Pedro Domecq in 1994. This coincided neatly with the collapse of the Mexican market, the most promising for Domecq, and it has all been downhill from there, not least for the share price.

An equal disaster has been the joint venture between Carlsberg, the Danish brewer, and Tetley, Allied's brewing arm. This was launched in 1993 under the soubriquet "probably the best merger in the world," a clever remark that has come back to haunt the two in the same way that John Gummer must now deeply regret the infamous hamburger photos.

Allied has been desperate to sell. The sticking point has been the Danes. Whether out of a misguided belief in the virtues of the venture or mere corporate pride, they have been refusing to pass on their half-stake to any buyer of Allied's half. One such, Whitbread, has already walked away. That can only leave Bass,

because the creepy consolidation that has cut through the brewing industry in recent years means there are now only four big producers, and the fourth, Scottish & Newcastle, is still replete from swallowing Courage.

As to the Danish question, the latest solution is apparently for Carlsberg to take a minority stake in the merged venture. This will not appeal to Sir Ian Prosser, chairman and chief executive at Bass and not a man keen on dissenting minority voices, but it might have to do. The competition authorities should be the real problem.

By all that is decent, Bass should be blocked from doing a deal that gives it almost 40 per cent of British brewing. S&N/Courage created a 30 per cent force, and that caused enough howls, not least from the likes of Bass. Another merger would create a triopoly controlling four fifths of brewing. Whitbread coming in third with a distant 14 per cent and in any event more concerned these days with retailing.

But the ways of the Office of Fair Trading are hard to predict.

The OFT is keener these days on interfering with cosy deals between brewers and pubs, so an unwinding of the agreements for Carlsberg-Tetley to supply Allied's pubs might suffice.

This would leave the way clear for a full demerger of Allied. Pubs and restaurants go one way, doughnuts and ice cream the other. At the core is a collection of drinks brands such as Beefeater gin and Teacher's whisky that the big international drinks groups would die for. But the absence of any firm price mooted for the Carlsberg-Tetley deal suggests that even this agreement is still some way off.

No room at the inn for discounts

□ THE good news is that the hotels in London have not put off visitors to the capital's hotels and triggered a downside in the tourist season just getting under way. The bad news is that the hoteliers can now charge pretty much what they want.

London hotels, like the big airlines, are now enjoying occu-

PENNINGTON



pancy rates in excess of 80 per cent. This might not sound too great, almost one empty room in four. In fact, bearing in mind the inevitable "dead nights" like Sunday when no one wants to stay, this means that when you ring up for a room for the night, your chances are slim unless you are booking well ahead.

Gone are the days of massive discounts, except in the provinces where the business trade is becoming canner. Instead the London hotels are even taking measures to discourage the deeply unprofitable charabanc trade, whereby large chunks of the hotel are let out at cheap rates to wagonloads of foreign tourists, preferring to concentrate instead on the individual visitor.

All the above is taken from the 10th round-up of the world hotel trade from the broker Kleinwort Benson, now something of an annual treat. Kleinwort's leisure team this time has attempted to calculate the incalculable, and find an index by which the performance of wildly differing hotels groups can be compared. This should allow the way management perform to be separated from and measured against the value of the hotel assets they are managing.

The first conclusion thrown up is that the Savoy is an excellent collection of hotels, badly run. So far, so obvious; but it is a useful proof of Kleinwort's mathematics. The second is a "could do better" mark against two of the second division operators, debt-plagued Queens Moat and already deeply unloved Vaux.

The third is that Granada knew what it was doing when it paid so much for Forte. The latter's hotels, now Granada's, have underperformed their potential and will improve once the low grade White Hart chain is sold to Regal shortly. The signs are that Granada is not hurrying to sell

the quality hotels it is pledged to dispose of; with two good years at least left for hotels, this looks like another shrewd move.

Joys of spring and redundancy

□ PROSPERITY without jobs may be a rallying cry of the whingeing classes. In financial services businesses, such as banks, building societies and insurance companies, it is an understatement. The latest CBI-Coopers & Lybrand survey shows the highest confidence rating for two years, yet 46 per cent of firms plan to axe jobs and only 10 per cent aim to recruit.

Many of these lost people are to be replaced by computers in the drive to cut costs. Even training spending, previously a growth area, is now coming under the knife.

From pensions to securities trading, domestic competition is the toughest in memory. This should be good for customers, but only if—some if—managers put service before the bottom line. Even if business grows, firms need to cut costs. Not that confidence is always justified. At New Year, a net 48 per cent expected better days. Only a net 5 per cent actually saw more business in the first quarter.

Building societies, supposedly the staidest of folk, are actually the most volatile. Year after year, their optimism outshines others, only to descend into deepest gloom when it is not realised. After a near-universal upturn in the past quarter, they are understandably the greatest optimists now. Sadly, however, their eyes shone in five of the past six springs as Easter nesting approached. This time, perhaps they will avoid that seasonal thud into depression.

Moving home loans

□ THIS is all getting too silly. The West Bromwich is now offering a nought per cent mortgage, which should mean that they give you the money to buy the house and you get to keep 25 years of profits. Nice deal, even in this housing market; but it is, of course, just another marketing gimmick. The West Brom has not found some miraculous way of reversing the gap between what it lends at and what it pays out: the cheap entry for new borrowers will simply be paid for by those whose mortgages are more than six months old.

BET and Rentokil in war of words

BY ALASDAIR MURRAY

THE £1.9 billion takeover battle between Rentokil and BET intensified yesterday after BET issued a revised profit forecast of £146 million, an increase of 32 per cent on last year.

But Rentokil immediately hit back, describing the forecast, made only three days after BET had confirmed the original forecast in a letter to shareholders, as "a farce".

The new figure is £4 million more than the previous estimate of £132 million made on March 21. BET also predicted that earnings per share would amount to 11.1p, a rise of 35 per

cent, while dividend cover would stand at 2.2 times.

John Clark, chief executive of BET, said: "The bid price stands at less than 20.5 times the sector multiple and recognises neither our 20 per cent dividend forecast for next year, nor 35 per cent earnings growth. With this information, it is an easy decision for BET shareholders to dismiss the offer."

But Clive Thompson, Rentokil chief executive, said: "The decision to issue a new forecast further undermines BET's credibility. There is no information as to where this late contribution to BET's profit has come from. There are still no details

about the company's cashflow or key items such as costs and exceptional items."

BET responded by describing the original profit forecast as "over-cautious". It added that it was receiving a good response from institutional investors as it continued a round of meetings.

BET's share price closed up 2p at 205.5p, a record high. Rentokil's share price rose 3p to 362p, valuing the paper offer at 201.6p a share.

BET's forecast is almost certainly its last defence shot as under takeover rules it cannot issue new information after Friday. Rentokil has a further week to raise its offer.

Jobs will go in MAI and United merger

BY ERIC REGULY

UNITED News and Media, which yesterday reported its last set of annual results, said the cost of its merger with MAI, the money-broking and media group, would be inflated by some redundancy charges.

The merger went unconditional on Tuesday and the companies' head offices are already being integrated. A spokesman said: "Everything will be looked at. Obviously, there will be job losses."

United said that the new group would review its portfolio to achieve greater focus on areas of strength. The speculation, played down by United, is that the *Daily Express* and the *Sunday Express* might be headed for the

auction block. In the year to December 31, the newspapers reported an operating profit of £7.3 million, against a profit of £30.8 million in the previous period.

Group operating profits increased 1 per cent to £145.8 million on turnover that rose marginally to £1.07 billion.

After exceptional items and restructuring charges taken at its national and regional newspapers, the pre-tax profit was £104.5 million, against a profit of £138 million. Earnings per share were 25p, compared with 39.5p.

A second interim dividend of 15.25p, making a total of 23p, unchanged from 1994, is to be paid on April 26.

Laird ready to carry on investing

LAIRD, the automotive engineering group, has said that it will continue to invest heavily in its businesses in spite of a slowdown in its markets in the first few months of the current year (see *Mortished* writes).

Laird's pre-tax profit rose 39 per cent, to £66.1 million, last year, when the company invested £108 million in organic growth and acquisitions.

John Gardiner, chairman, said that 1995 was a record year, but the unusually strong start was followed by "lower levels of activity in the second half, which have continued in the opening months of 1996".

Turnover rose by 21 per cent, to £888 million. The dividend rises to 12p, from 11.3p, after earnings of 34.4p (26.3p). *Tempus*, page 28

Bid costs will hit Lloyds Chemists

BY ERIC REGULY

LLOYDS Chemists said yesterday that second-half earnings would suffer because of the costs associated with the takeover bids launched by Gehe of Germany and UniChem.

Jonathan Fellows, finance director, said fees for the auditors, lawyers and merchant bankers would total £4 million to £5 million this year.

Both bids lapsed after their referral to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission in March. The MMC is due to complete its investigation in late June, allowing Gehe and UniChem to renew their competing bids. The winner should be known by autumn.

Mr Fellows said that Lloyds had ceased converting Health and Beauty stores in light of the company's uncertain future. Only 37 of the 180 outlets have been refurbished and, as a result, sales in the division have been falling.

The company reported pre-tax profits of £25.8 million in the half year to December 31, down 2.7 per cent on the previous period. Earnings per share were 13.33p, against 14.04p. The downturn was because of losses on the disposal of surplus property. Operating profits were up 3.4 per cent to £31.2 million on turnover of £562 million, up 2.1 per cent. An interim dividend of 3.1p, up 6.9 per cent, is to be paid on June 7.

IT DOESN'T MEAN STOP. IT MEANS GO.

The one thing that drives the really successful businessman forward is determination. Determination to seek out and exploit new opportunities wherever and whenever they arise. Determination to be the really successful businessman. Nothing it seems, except Japan. Japan is characteristically some businessmen usually spot the smallest opportunity at a thousand miles. They have developed a blind spot when it comes to the second biggest economy in the world.

Which is where Action Japan comes in. Set up by the DTI it helps focus UK business eyes on what is undoubtedly the major opportunity of the moment.

On its own, exports to Japan from the United Kingdom are up 26%. (We said the opportunity was being missed by some, not by all.) The potential, however, is even bigger. Because Japan is changing.

Japanese ministries are busy cutting red tape. A consumer revolution is boosting demand for imported goods. At the same time, because of

the strength of the Yen, Japanese manufacturers are actively seeking lower cost alternatives to internal suppliers.

So the scene is set. Without question, Japan really is the land of the rising business opportunity. And the answer to how you best exploit that opportunity is Action Japan.

Action Japan will provide bespoke help to any business wanting to develop in Japan.

Experienced businessmen, with first hand knowledge of the country, have been seconded from industry to work with a team from the DTI.

Together we will help you analyse the market opportunities and, crucially, help to identify the important contacts you need to get business rolling.

Action Japan has also drawn up a calendar of special events, trade shows and missions to Japan. All specially designed to help ease the way into the Japanese market. The businessman determined to do business in Japan should call Action Japan now on: 0171-215 8531.

Because the lights have definitely changed to green.



ECONOMIC VIEW

The changing face of inflation worldwide

Several forces have put competitive markets in the ascendant, says Roger Bootle

Governments always make a mess of things. This is the financial markets' first working assumption. So their reaction to the wide-spread adoption throughout the world of published targets for very low rates of inflation has been one of scepticism or outright cynicism. That is why long-term interest rates are so high in relation to the currently low rates of inflation.

But when assessing the economic forecasts implied by financial markets it is useful for outsiders to employ another rule of thumb — the consensus is always wrong. All you then have to do is work out which way it is wrong.

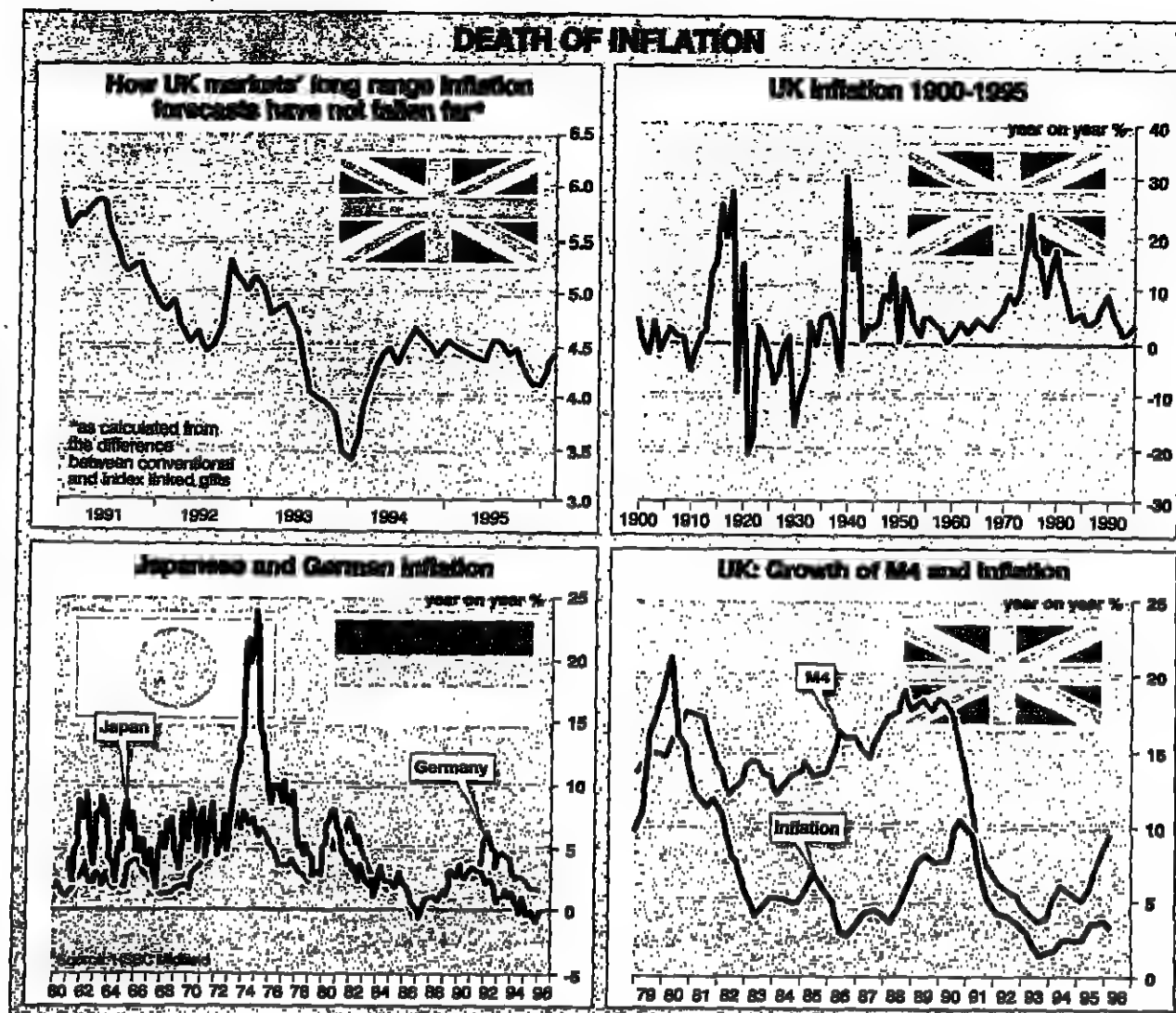
Inflation has turned out much lower than the markets and most commentators have forecast for several years now. Much turns on what you think explains this. The orthodox answer — the one proffered by the Old Believers (aka the monetarists) — is that money supply growth was for a time weak. This led to weak demand and ultimately to low inflation.

Yet if that is all that has happened then the corollary is that once demand revives, inflation will pick up again. Moreover, money supply growth has recently picked up strongly and some voices are already calling for higher interest rates to head off the supposed inflationary danger. So the moral, if you believe this story, is mind your eyes! Bad times are just around the corner — again.

This view that nothing in the world has changed strikes me as much too cosy for the Old Believers and much too gloomy for the rest of us. There will always be a level of unemployment and capacity utilisation where inflation re-emerges. But is it the same point as it was before? I think that there are good reasons to believe that it is now further off. Consider the evidence. In September 1992, a crisis in the ERM led several countries to devalue or depreciate their currencies — Finland, Sweden, Italy, Spain and Britain (later followed by the Irish Republic). The verdict of the so-called experts and of the financial markets was virtually unanimous — inflation in these countries would surge, wiping out the immediate gain in competitiveness, but leaving a lasting legacy of higher nominal interest rates, short and long.

But this view, so widely held, also proved to be blatantly wrong — another casualty of the events surrounding Black (Golden) Wednesday. In all of the countries that devalued, the result was the same. Inflation rose very little, the gain in competitiveness was sustained, and exports picked up.

Or think about unemployment. In the US, it has fallen to



5½ per cent and the inflation hawks are still waiting for the upsurge in wages. In the UK, it has fallen to 8 per cent and yet, contrary to nearly all the forecasts, the growth of average earnings has fallen.

In 1994-95, there was an upsurge of commodity prices that raised fears of a repeat of what had happened in the early 1970s. Again, the markets thought that it was the same old world. Again, they were wrong. The rise in costs was passed through the production process, but at each stage some of the impact was absorbed by profits. By the time it reached retail prices, there was little effect. And there was no response from wages.

What can explain the apparent change in the behaviour of inflation? I believe that in

nature have combined to produce a climate of anxiety, not only among workers, but also among employers, who fear that their market position will be cut from under them.

Thanks to the rapid advances of dynamic countries, especially in the East, and the associated process of globalisation, businesses are now increasingly able to conduct a diversified production process on a global basis.

This undermines local monopoly positions, sweeps away producers with higher costs, and obliges the survivors to keep their costs under control to retain their position. Meanwhile, across the world, privatisation is reducing the size of the sectors where state ownership shields both workers and managers from market pres-

sure. In Japan, of course, price deflation has already happened. The latest inflation figure in Japan is minus 0.4 per cent. People are often inclined to dismiss the significance of this by saying "Ah, but that's Japan" as though this somehow or other makes it irrelevant. It is true that price deflation in Japan has owed a good deal to the super-strong yen, but it is also true that the full effect of this has not been passed on directly in the form of lower prices in the shops because of Japan's rigid distribution system.

What makes this all the more striking is that until recent years, Japan was a country with relatively high inflation. In reaction to the oil shock of the early 1970s, Japanese inflation for a time exceeded 20 per cent. And in the 1960s, inflation was regularly higher in Japan than it was in Britain, never mind Germany. Moreover, there is a country close to home that could readi-

ly follow the Japanese example — Germany. With the inflation rate currently running at 1.6 per cent, a further sharp appreciation of the mark, combined with sluggish demand, could see German inflation in negative territory.

Price deflation is certainly not an immediate prospect for most countries in the industrial West. But it will, I believe, be a live prospect in response to the next bout of persistent weak demand. And when it happens, the financial markets will have to sit up and take notice. For the unthinking assumption shared by almost everyone that once inflation has reached 1-2½ per cent the risk is all upwards will then have been shattered. At that point, things will start to get interesting. And if economic policy and financial structures are completely unprepared for the change, things will also start to turn dangerous.

Roger Bootle is chief economist of the HSBC Group. His book, *The Death of Inflation: Surviving and Thriving in the Zero Era*, will be published on April 17 by Nicholas Brealey Publishing.

□ Anatole Kaletsky is away

Will a new era of passbook power dawn?

Robert Miller and Patricia Tehan on changing times for building societies

Accountability to tens of millions of building society members has never appeared to be high on the list of priorities for society board directors. Far from practising what they preach, building society directors and senior management have, in many cases, run their organisations as personal fiefdoms. Over the past decade salaries have soared to almost match those of their publicly listed brethren and, in some cases, even beat them. And it was almost impossible, and still is, for ordinary outside members to be elected to a building society board.

But times are changing. Last month, the Treasury published a draft Bill whose ultimate aim is to usher in a new era of passbook power for building society members. Angela Knight, the Treasury minister with responsibility for societies, has given a clear warning that in return for greater business freedoms, such as being able to branch out into general household and motor insur-

ance, would improve the new bank's scope for profitable growth, for instance through the acquisition of mortgage books. Secondly, the formation of the Northern Rock Foundation would enable the society to help the wider north east of England community. Thirdly, the members would benefit through the free share distribution.

Although Northern Rock is seen as having ambitious plans to increase its share of the mortgage market, Christopher Sharp, managing director, said that the society had "no plans to diversify or to absorb another building society at the moment and none for the period of this conversion".

He denied that the society had, as recently as last year, said it was committed to mutualism. "No building society board can ignore conversion, it is written into the Act. But each must come up with a solution. It is not true that mutualism is over, this is not about mutualism it is about Northern Rock."

Mr Finn added that the board had weighed up all the possibilities. He said: "One of the problems with third parties is how they can run the business more efficiently. The only way they could do it is getting rid of large numbers of staff across the North East. We have to take into account the interests of all of our stakeholders. We do not have a duty to simply sell the society for the highest price. Our duty is to consider all aspects."

The societies that at present at least have opted to stay close to their roots, such as Bradford & Bingley, Britannia and Yorkshire, have belatedly started to return profits to their members in the form of lower home loan rates and higher returns on savings accounts.

Averaged out over a period of, say, ten years or so, members may well be better off than under one-off free share offers available under flotation plans.

But as yet it is the converters that appear to have stolen all the headlines. If there are benefits to mutualism, and there assuredly are, then societies should return more of the rewards to investors rather than into their own pockets.

In many cases, directors have run societies as personal fiefdoms

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Haynes loses global role

ALASDAIR HAYNES has stepped down as £500,000-a-year head of global equity derivatives at HSBC. James Capel, in what amounts to an April Fool's pranks, Haynes, who joined from UBS 18 months ago, was ousted on April 1, the day the firm added HSBC to its name. Capel insists the departure was "completely amicable", but admits to a falling-out over strategy. Haynes, it seems, wanted overall control of the 80-strong derivatives team, which spans operations from Hong Kong to New York. Capel wanted to run things on regional lines.

Isma poser

CAT fights can be expected at CIBC Wood Gundy, after the appointment of Martin Shaw as head of fixed income trading for Europe, who will report to Simon Ellen, head of global trading. Outside CIBC, both men play an active role within the International Securities Market Association. Inside information suggests trouble ahead as Isma regulations do not allow two committee members from the same company.

Question Time

GILLIAN SHEPHERD has turned tail on her decision to speak at the Institute of Directors annual conference on April 24. The Education and Employment Secretary has suddenly realised she has Parliamentary Question Time that afternoon, an event normally timed months in advance. Peter Lilley, Social Security Secretary, has stepped gallantly in to take centre stage alongside Sir Stanley Kalms, in defence of the motion that "EU member states should be free to regulate their own labour markets". The opposition, John Monks and Christopher Haskins, are trembling.



Shepherd: double booked

THE quick-selling *Aga Magazine* includes an adventurous recipe for its Home County readers. Slow-cooked beef, "a superb freezer standby".

Dunblane gains

BIG beams and pockets at the Headlam Group turned a spat with Albert E Sharp into a £1,000 charity donation. When Ian Kirkham, chief executive of the floor-covering distributors, agreed to sit at a black-tie table hosted by his stockbrokers it was with the intention of settling a wrangle over fees. Both protagonists were driving a hard bargain, but caught up in the spirit of generosity at the Coopers & Lybrand PLC awards, organised in association with *The Times*, they agreed to donate the fees to the Dunblane Fund.

Wall to wall

TOM SMALL, chief executive of Vymura, says his 1840s Georgian house in Manchester is "wallpapered from floor to ceiling". Small's wife, a former designer, insists they get someone in to redecorate at least every four years. For now, it's a vagueish subtle background with an "adventurous" border.

MORAG PRESTON

Hiscox will pay £10m towards Lloyd's settlement

From the Chairman of Hiscox Holdings
Sir, The cry from action groups and from names and members' agents is for managing agents to pay more towards the settlement of litigation for the reconstruction and renewal (R&R) plan to succeed (Business Letters, March 29).

I thought it would help the debate if I disclosed that our managing agency, Hiscox Syndicates Ltd, has paid voluntarily or will pay voluntarily a total of £10 million in contributions as few names in our experience are aware of the contribution being made by the remaining businesses in the market.

Our managing agency is not

Interested in business for the interest it pays

From Mr John Turner
Sir, Having just received notice over bank charges, we note that our bank takes interest off our business, but takes no interest in it. Banks like to take an interest in a business with a view, once their interest is greater, to remove it. Our bank seems disinterested in

the business and interested only in interest.
Interesting?
Yours faithfully,
JOHN TURNER
(Partner,
AJT Environmental Consultants),
The Studio,
27 Brandling Place South,
Newcastle upon Tyne.

Big giveaway, what giveaway?

From George Thompson
Sir, In a report (*The Times* March 27) referring to the conversion of the Halifax Building Society to banking status Mike Blackburn, chief executive is quoted as saying "... this is possibly the biggest giveaway in terms of value in the history of the world."

Who does Mr Blackburn think he's kidding? The "giveaway" is merely a means of transferring the reserves to where they rightly belong: in the hands of the investing and borrowing members who have allowed their profits to remain in the society. It is unfortunate that some members will not benefit. Management of some of the societies wishing to remain mutual are realising this situation by paying investors more generous rates and charging less to borrowers. Hopefully, some means can be devised to ensure that those members who have contributed to the well-being of these societies will be recompensed for their loyalty.

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE THOMPSON
20 Tilsforth Road
Beaconsfield, Bucks.

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For further information please contact Peter Scott, Managing Partner, Eversheds, London.
Tel: 0171 919 4500

EVERSHEDS
The Business Lawyers

German media group merges

By ERIC REGILL

A NEW force in broadcasting has been formed through the merger of the television and radio interests of Bertelsmann, Germany's largest media group, and CLT of Luxembourg, whose businesses range from RTL, Germany's largest TV station, to Talk Radio in London.

The deal came after talks between CLT and BSKyB broke down. BSKyB, the satellite broadcaster is 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of The Times. The two had discussed launching a digital satellite TV service in Germany and elsewhere on the Continent.

With Bertelsmann at its side, CLT hopes to fulfill that ambition quickly. Digital satellite TV is considered the next frontier in broadcasting.

BSKyB now plans to enter the market in partnership with Canal Plus and Havas, the large French media groups.

Meanwhile, DirecTV, the American direct-to-home broadcaster that is owned by Hughes Electronics, the satellite maker, is making plans to start a European service.

Bertelsmann will benefit from CLT's strength in free TV. CLT has extensive TV interests in Germany, The Netherlands and France as well as a stake in Channel 5, Britain's new terrestrial channel.

The merged company will be owned equally by Bertelsmann and Audiofin, a Luxembourg holding company that is CLT's parent company. Audiofin, in turn, is owned by Groupe Bruxelles Lambert of Belgium and Havas. Bertelsmann has agreed to pay Audiofin 30 billion Belgian francs (£4.4 million) to finance CLT's expansion into digital TV and other areas. The deal requires approval from regulators in Germany and Brussels.

The company will have annual sales of about \$3.3 billion and will control the German TV channels RTL, RTL2, Super RTL and Vox.



Peter Curry, Unitech founder, left, who is to join the Siebe board after the takeover, with Barrie Stephens, chairman of Siebe, and Allen Yurko

Siebe buys Unitech in agreed £520 million takeover deal

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

SIEBE, the engineering group, has launched an agreed offer for Unitech, the electronics company, valuing the company at £520 million. It will establish Siebe as the world's largest supplier of transformers and control systems.

The bid has been expected since Siebe paid 500p a share last month Electrowatt, the Swiss utility, for a 25 per cent stake in Unitech. Siebe has since acquired 4.1 per cent more from Electrowatt at 610p. Siebe shares slipped 23p to 874p yesterday, while Unitech shares climbed 30p to 704p, just below the offer price of some 715p a share. Siebe insisted the takeover would not be earnings dilutive this year and said it should be earnings enhancing next year. Efficiency gains are expected by Siebe to yield cost savings of £5-10 million a year.

Allen Yurko, Siebe chief executive, said: "There are three clear synergies we can take care of immediately, including improved purchasing power and global distribution channels."

Siebe is offering 0.804 shares for every one Unitech share, valuing Unitech shares at about 715p. There is a cash alternative of 659.28p, while Unitech is also paying a second dividend of 5.93p in lieu of a final dividend.

The offer represents a 39 per cent premium over the Unitech share price on March 15, the day before Siebe first purchased a stake in Unitech.

The company said in total it holds acceptances from 30.3 per cent of the company, including a 1.2 per cent stake held by Unitech directors.

As a result of the Electrowatt purchase Siebe is paying an average price of 670p a share, or £488 million, for Unitech.

Peter Curry, founder and chairman of Unitech, will be invited to join the Siebe board.

Mr Yurko confirmed that the other Unitech executive directors would also continue in the merged company.

The offer values Mr Curry's holding in Unitech at £4.4 million. He holds share options with a potential profit of £375,000. Jeff Hewitt, Unitech finance director, has options with a potential profit of £300,000, while Joshua Hauser, managing director of the power supplies division, could realise £670,000 from his share options.

Siebe said the deal would not result in any major restructuring and it had no plans for significant disposals.

Mr Yurko said: "The cornerstone of the deal is the electric powers control business which will clearly establish us as the global leader. But we are also effectively buying into East Asia and see significant opportunities in the heating, ventilating and air conditioning business."

Unitech holds a 50.6 per cent in Nemic Lambda, the Japanese controls group, which is valued at £273 million.

Daimler drops dividend after big loss

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN STUTTGART

DAIMLER-BENZ, the German industrial company, confirmed yesterday that it would not pay a dividend for the first time in 45 years after losing a record DM15.7 billion in 1995.

The loss was slightly lower than Daimler's earlier forecast of a DM6 billion shortfall, but it still came as a massive blow to the industrial conglomerate that in many ways symbolises corporate Germany. Daimler, which includes Mercedes-Benz, the luxury carmaker, said that it had attempted to include every scrap of negative financial news in its 1995 books and believed the way was now clear for it to recover to clear profitability this year.

Jürgen Schrempf, the chairman, said: "The show of strength of the last few months showed that the board has taken measures to offer Daimler-Benz shareholders an attractive return."

Daimler's results were devastated in 1995 by DM5.1 billion restructuring costs. Of that, DM3.9 billion was the cost of restructuring at AEG AG and writing off Fokker NV, the Dutch aircraft manufacturer that collapsed into bankruptcy in February.

Daimler has been remoulding AEG for several years and plans to absorb the remainder of the group after France's Alcatel Alsthom takes over AEG's systems and automation division.

Another DM1.2 billion was lost because of further rationalisation at Daimler.

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Nine pillars of principle

Ian Percy outlines the ASB's new code for those in the auditing profession

In 1991 when the Auditing Practices Board was formed with its unique membership of half practitioners and half users, the first internal conference identified differences in understanding between users and practitioners on fundamentals of auditing. It became clear we had to encapsulate the principles of auditing in one statement and debate the role of auditors for the future to meet public expectations.

That led to the publication of the paper for public debate, *The Future Development of Auditing*. The subsequent paper, *The Audit Agenda*, published in 1994, drew together the responses from the *Future Development* and the Scottish Institute's research report, *Auditing Into The Twenty First Century*. All those papers included a section on enduring Principles of Auditing.

In 1995 APB published a new set of *Auditing Standards and Guidelines* conforming to UK practice and international auditing standards. It also published standards on going concern, fraud, laws and regulations, related parties and guidance on reporting on corporate governance. Now the UK is in a lead position internationally. This February APB published *The Audit Agenda - Next Steps* and the *Research Agenda*, issued to marshal the resources of academics and firms in developing future standards to meet public expectations in a stakeholder and technological environment.

A key to a quality corporate and public sector environment where external audit is critical to confidence in corporate governance, is a clear understanding of the principles that can be expected of the profession. We have therefore developed the Auditors' Code, for users of the audit process, auditors and aspiring auditors. It has nine principles:

Accountability
Auditors act for primary stakeholders, with regard to the public interest. The identity of primary stakeholders is determined by reference to that requiring audit: in companies, shareholders are the primary stakeholder.

Integrity
Auditors act with integrity, fulfilling their responsibilities with honesty, fairness and truthfulness. Confidential information obtained in the audit is disclosed only when required in the public interest, or by law.

Objectivity and independence
Auditors are objective, express-



Ian Percy says objective auditing is fundamental to the APB

ing opinions independently of the entity and its directors. issues and expertise in accumulating and assessing evidence for an opinion.

Competence
Auditors act with skill, derived from qualification, training and practical experience. This demands understanding of financial reporting and business

Rigour
Auditors approach their work with thoroughness and professional scepticism. They assess critically information and exp-

lanations obtained during their work and such extra evidence as they consider necessary for the audit.

Judgment
Auditors apply professional judgment, taking account of materiality in the context of the matters reported on.

Clear communication
Auditors' reports contain clear expressions of opinion and set out information necessary for a proper understanding of them.

Association
Auditors allow their reports to be included in documents with other information only if they think the extra information is not in conflict with the matters in their report and have no cause to think it misleading.

Providing value
Auditors add to reliability and quality of financial reporting; they provide directors and officers with constructive observations from the audit process; thus contributing to effective operation of business, capital markets and the public sector.

Professor Ian Percy is chairman of The Audit Agenda steering group which prepared the "code". APB vice-chairman and Accounts Commission for Scotland chairman, a director of several companies and past president of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland.

At long last, we may be on to a winner

The announcement that the accountancy profession has come up with another plan to sort out public confidence in its reputation is enough to sink anyone's heart down to their boots. But this time the profession insists it is different. And it might be right. The plan is to create an independent board made up of "people of standing and strong independent mind". This would then be able to consider aspects of the profession and issue its views on them. The theory is that if it said "jump", the profession would have to jump.

The prospect is enticing. The profession has been allowed to get away with a considerable degree of lethargy and complacency for years. It has busied itself with things which would never work, like merging the different accountancy bodies and with regulation because successive governments have told it to do so. It has set up unteemed committees to look at the future. But by and large it has not achieved much. The problem has been the use of the umbrella body that supposedly brings the leaders of the six accountancy bodies together to decide issues that concern the profession as a whole. All this structure does is allow endless squabbles to be fuelled. Presidents and chief executives become aloof and pompous at such a rarified attitude and much given to arrogance and competitive venom. The significance of the plans for a new independent review body is that although they came from a committee representing all six accounting bodies, there was not a president or chief executive among them. If you were to cross your fingers you might even see this as a model for harmony in the future. The English ICA set up its own committee under Chris Swinson of BDO Stoy Hayward almost two years ago.

He produced an initial report suggesting an independent regulatory body. This was considered startlingly radical and the council asked for something which smacked of less independence. By this time the other accounting bodies were thinking that they should come up with ideas of their own. Several schemes were put forward. The whole process seemed to have reached a traditional impasse. All six bodies had different views and everyone would enter a process whereby chief executives and presidents would have a series of acrimonious meetings at which they would rubbish everyone else's proposals. This time that didn't happen. An effort was made to pool all the position statements and reduce them to what everyone agreed on. Then, through a series of meetings and a lot of one-to-one conversations, a model was built and amended. It was built through trust and good, friendly hard work. There was not a president or chief executive in sight. And the framework was published this week.

I could tell immediately that it had a chance of working. I received a panic-stricken phone call from the chief executive of one of the other accountancy bodies last week asking me if I knew what the English ICA was going to say at the press conference this week, and if I did, could I tell him. If chief executives are worried that something might be out of the starting blocks without them straining it at birth, we could be on to a winner.

The plans may also relieve ordinary accountants' fear of more and more regulation for its own sake. Whenever a regulatory body is accused of not being effective enough, the temptation is to simply make the rules more onerous and not necessarily more effective. There is, as Swinson would point out, a rather effect. The existence of an independent body outside the process means realistic reforms could be made. The new body, possibly to be known as the Public Standards Review Board for Accountancy, would have no constraints on its remit. It could investigate whatever issues it wanted, from whether disciplinary procedures are fast enough through to a view on litigation and liability and the independence of auditors. Much would ride on the quality of the proposed body's chief executive, staff and members. But the plan is, as one member of the implementation committee put it, "to make the relationship between the accountancy bodies and the new board transparent and open". He added that this was "not British" and a bit of an innovation.

The detail is now what needs to be sorted out. And that is where the dead hand of all past squabbles may reach out and compromise the prospect of a truly independent body free to deliver a well-aimed kick at whatever complacent target it chooses.

This is the point where the profession either proves its maturity by agreeing to the plans or sinks back into mediocrity by insisting on compromise.



ROBERT BRUCE

Someone has to do it

PROBABLY the worst job in accountancy is that of Anthony Surtees. He is the independent Reviewer of Complaints for the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales's professional conduct department. His annual report, published this week, is a catalogue of woe. "Just over half of the reviews undertaken gave rise to correspondence after the review," he reports. "In many cases in a prolonged and sometimes rather abusive

Jokes "R" Us

ACCOUNTANTS are widely

Added value

THE idea that leadership on

Fast bowlers

COOPERS & LYBRAND'S enthusiasm for matters technological extends beyond cricket. Mark Waugh, of Australia, is ahead in the voting for player of the year on its cricket ratings site on the Internet. But just to prove that accounting is really Coopers & Lybrand's business the firm has launched a tax self-assessment help site. <http://www.Coopers.co.uk> is the place to sort out the new tax regime.

ROBERT BRUCE

National Express wins Gatwick rail franchise

By JONATHAN PRYNN, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

GATWICK EXPRESS, British Rail's only profitable train franchise, has been sold to the National Express coach and bus group. The company will pay an average £13.5 million a year for the right to operate the service.

The deal is the first under rail privatisation in which a private bidder will pay the Treasury for a franchise, rather than receive a government subsidy to take it off British Rail's hands.

In the first year of the 15-year franchise, National Express will pay £4.6 million compared with British Rail's estimated profit for the franchise of £3.9 million.

By the end of the franchise period, ending in 2011, National Express will be contrib-

uting £22.6 million a year to the public purse under the terms of its agreement with Roger Salmon, the rail franchise director.

National Express beat off competition for Gatwick Express, which runs a non-stop service between the airport and Victoria station, from a management buyout group and Richard Branson's Virgin Group.

Adam Mills, the deputy chief executive of National Express, said the company had undertaken to introduce new tailor-made rolling stock on the electrified route by 1999 to replace the existing fleet of seven InterCity trains.

It has already held talks with train manufacturers and leasing companies, Mr Mills

said. If it fails to bring the new trains on to the route within seven years, the franchise life will be cut to seven years.

National Express will provide a quarter-hourly service from 5am to midnight and a trial hourly service during the night when there are currently no Gatwick Express trains.

It also promised more on-board staff, an investment of £100,000 on staff training with "special attention paid to the needs of overseas visitors". There will be an on-board check-in facility for hand-luggage-only passengers.

About 3.5 million passengers, many of them package holidaymakers, use the Gatwick Express each year. It employs 311 staff and had £27.2 million revenue last year.

Sir George Young, the Transport Secretary, said: "This is further evidence that the process of franchising is bringing benefits to both taxpayers and passengers. I'm delighted that National Express has won this franchise and that it plans to provide new rolling stock."

"We really do have momentum in rail privatisation now as this is the second franchise to be awarded in the last five days."

Brian Wilson, Labour's transport spokesman, said public investment had turned Gatwick Express into a profitable modern route. He said: "There is no advantage to passengers or taxpayers in handing it over to a bus company." However, as long as National Express "can stay within the letter of their contract", the franchise would be allowed to run its course under a Labour Government, Mr Wilson said.

The franchise is the fourth to be let by Mr Salmon, after the sales of Great Western, South West Trains and InterCity East Coast. Two more, Midland Main Line and Network SouthCentral are expected to follow within weeks, bringing around 40 per cent of the passenger network into private hands.



Mike Ost, left, with Stuart Moberley, finance director of McKechnie, at the company's factory in Walsall

Destocking hits McKechnie

By PAUL DURMAN

DEMAND held back by customer destocking and a weak housing market restricted McKechnie, the plastic and metal components group, to interim pre-tax profits of £21.6 million.

Although this was 6.6 per cent up on the previous year, profits from the continuing business were flat. The rise was because of a £600,000 contribution from acquisitions and a £530,000 reduction in the company's interest charge.

Mike Ost, McKechnie's chief executive, said the four main markets for plastic components — cellular phones, computers and other business electronics, automotive, and consumer durables — had all experienced destocking.

McKechnie expects the pressure from destocking to ease. With the benefit from recent American acquisitions, the company is confident it will continue to grow.

In the six months to Janu-

ary 31, McKechnie's plastics division made a profit of £6 million on sales up 11 per cent at £93 million. The Paxton arm has started to benefit from a £27 million order from Tesco for reusable containers.

Profits in consumer products declined 5 per cent to £7.1 million. Mr Ost was pleased that McKechnie managed to increase its sales in spite of a 25 per cent decline in new house building in Australia.

Specialist products, which includes aerospace fastenings, increased profits 11 per cent to £9.4 million.

McKechnie is increasing its interim dividend from 5.5p to 6p a share. Earnings rose from 14.7p to 16.2p a share.

Mr Ost said: "A 10 per cent earnings per share improvement in this environment is a very solid performance. We are optimistic we will be able to continue to do at least that in the second half."

Restaurant chain to expand

By ALASDAIR MURRAY

CITY Centre Restaurants, which owns the Garfunkel and Deep Pan Pizza chains, said that it would speed up expansion this year after announcing a 10 per cent rise in profits to £15.5 million.

The company aims to open 50 new branches this year, with its Caffè Uno and Mexican chains setting the lead. Last year City Centre opened 28 new restaurants.

Bruce Johnston, the chairman, gave warning that refurbishment of the flagship Chiquito restaurant in Leicester Square, central London, and of the Naches chain would have some impact on first-half performance. He said: "Whilst this will restrict performance during the first half, overall trading is encouraging so far and, with the benefit from new branch openings, we are confident of our prospects for the year as a whole."

Turnover rose 7.8 per cent to £111 million in 1995, while the total dividend increased 12 per cent to 2.24p. The profit increase was achieved in spite of a difficult first half in which turnover was hit by the hot summer and a £600,000 exceptional charge for restructuring the pizza division. The company said that the performance of the pizza division was now improving.

A final dividend of 1.79p (1.55p) is payable on June 3.

Fall in bad debts aids Co-op Bank

By KAREN ZAGOR

THE Co-operative Bank has turned in record profits for a second consecutive year thanks largely to a 29 per cent reduction in provisions for bad debts.

Pre-tax profits for 1995 rose 33 per cent to £36.7 million, compared with £27.5 million. Provisions for bad debt narrowed to £22.7 million from £32 million.

Stripping out bad debt provisions, profits were flat, at £60.2 million, compared with £59.5 million. Terry Thomas, managing director, said results included £10 million in discretionary spending in the last quarter to develop its distribution system.

The bank said provisions may continue to improve if economic recovery continues. Credit quality in the corporate sector was stable throughout the year, with a slight improvement in the last quarter.

million, from £238.3 million. After last year's record results, the bank pledged not to impose any compulsory redundancies for at least two years. This year, it discussed plans for growth over the next five years. The bank plans to take a cautious approach, avoiding new and untested markets. Instead, it will focus on the personal banking sector. The bank is already expanding its telephone banking service, which is open 24 hours every day of the year.

Rob Thomas, building societies analyst at UBS, said: "I think the Co-op has discovered over the years that personal banking is the jewel in its crown. It doesn't want to be in commercial lending where competition is extremely intense, apart from some small areas where it has an edge, such as lending to charities."

Door stays open in Australia for UK firms

Power sale to continue

FROM RACHIEL BRIDGE IN SYDNEY

BRITISH electricity companies have been given a second chance to buy into Australia's electricity industry, after a landslide victory for the State of Victoria's Liberal Party this week opened the door for a new wave of privatisation.

The State of Victoria has already raised more than \$11 billion (£5.6 billion) from the sale of five power distributors and one power generator — which was sold to a consortium headed by PowerGen of the UK for \$2.4 billion last month, in what has been hailed as one of Australia's most successful privatisations.

Jeff Kennett, the returning

Liberal Premier, pledged to push ahead with the sale of a further \$3 billion of assets, saying: "There has been no government in Australia since the war that has dared to govern in the way in which we have and has clearly succeeded overwhelmingly." Bob Carr, the Labour Premier of New South Wales, said: "This has given a radical conservative government an opportunity to pursue a hardline, Thatcherite agenda."

Modelled heavily on the UK's electricity privatisation, the Victorian sell-off has already attracted a lot of interest from British companies, with Scottish Power, Southern

Electric and National Power all having played an active part in the bidding.

Heading the new sales list is the 2,000MW Loy Yang generator, with a \$4 billion price tag, while the 1,600MW Hazelwood power station is expected to sell for more than \$1.5 billion and the Powernet Victoria transmission company for \$2 billion.

Legislation by the Victoria state government already requires electricity companies to achieve real price reductions to residential and small business customers of 9.1 per cent and 22 per cent respectively up to the year 2000.

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Home Loan Rate	7.25	0.24	7.5
Home Improvement Loan Rate	9.25	0.24	9.5
Loans sanctioned before 26.4.89			
Home Mortgage Rate	7.25	0.24	7.4

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The Listening Bank

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Equities finish with modest falls

[illegible]

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES				BANKS			
1974	1973	1972	% CHG	1974	1973	1972	% CHG
152	150	148	1.3	527	524	521	0.6
153	151	149	1.3	528	525	522	0.6
154	152	150	1.3	529	526	523	0.6
155	153	151	1.3	530	527	524	0.6
156	154	152	1.3	531	528	525	0.6
157	155	153	1.3	532	529	526	0.6
158	156	154	1.3	533	530	527	0.6
159	157	155	1.3	534	531	528	0.6
160	158	156	1.3	535	532	529	0.6
161	159	157	1.3	536	533	530	0.6
162	160	158	1.3	537	534	531	0.6
163	161	159	1.3	538	535	532	0.6
164	162	160	1.3	539	536	533	0.6
165	163	161	1.3	540	537	534	0.6
166	164	162	1.3	541	538	535	0.6
167	165	163	1.3	542	539	536	0.6
168	166	164	1.3	543	540	537	0.6
169	167	165	1.3	544	541	538	0.6
170	168	166	1.3	545	542	539	0.6
171	169	167	1.3	546	543	540	0.6
172	170	168	1.3	547	544	541	0.6
173	171	169	1.3	548	545	542	0.6
174	172	170	1.3	549	546	543	0.6
175	173	171	1.3	550	547	544	0.6
176	174	172	1.3	551	548	545	0.6
177	175	173	1.3	552	549	546	0.6
178	176	174	1.3	553	550	547	0.6
179	177	175	1.3	554	551	548	0.6
180	178	176	1.3	555	552	549	0.6
181	179	177	1.3	556	553	550	0.6
182	180	178	1.3	557	554	551	0.6
183	181	179	1.3	558	555	552	0.6
184	182	180	1.3	559	556	553	0.6
185	183	181	1.3	560	557	554	0.6
186	184	182	1.3	561	558	555	0.6
187	185	183	1.3	562	559	556	0.6
188	186	184	1.3	563	560	557	0.6
189	187	185	1.3	564	561	558	0.6
190	188	186	1.3	565	562	559	0.6
191	189	187	1.3	566	563	560	0.6
192	190	188	1.3	567	564	561	0.6
193	191	189	1.3	568	565	562	0.6
194	192	190	1.3	569	566	563	0.6
195	193	191	1.3	570	567	564	0.6
196	194	192	1.3	571	568	565	0.6
197	195	193	1.3	572	569	566	0.6
198	196	194	1.3	573	570	567	0.6
199	197	195	1.3	574	571	568	0.6
200	198	196	1.3	575	572	569	0.6
201	199	197	1.3	576	573	570	0.6
202	200	198	1.3	577	574	571	0.6
203	201	199	1.3	578	575	572	0.6
204	202	200	1.3	579	576	573	0.6
205	203	201	1.3	580	577	574	0.6
206	204	202	1.3	581	578	575	0.6
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High	Low	Company	Price	Chg	%	High	Low	Company	Price	Chg	%
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42	42	Aluminum	100	0	0	42	42	Aluminum	100	0	0
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[illegible]

first direct "I don't have to get dressed to go to my bank"

for 24 hour telephone banking

[illegible]

to get
ed to
my
phone banking

Member FISC Group

Oil & Gas

BRITISH FUNDS

UNDATED

INDEX-Linked

INDEX-Linked

101	81 Alcon	104H	343		
102	82 Alcon	209	42	12.6	
103	83 Alcon	622	119	8	
104	84 Alcon	119	8		
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ملک و امور الہیہ

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Adoption papers for ombudsman Elements causing nervous shock

In re a subpoena issued by the Commissioner for Local Administration

Before Mr Justice Carnwath
[Judgment April 2]

It was Parliament's intention that the Commissioner for Local Administration (the local ombudsman) should have jurisdiction to investigate matters relating to adoption and that he should have very wide powers to pursue those investigations. Therefore, it was not contrary to the public interest that the commissioner should be entitled to obtain from a local authority privileged confidential information from its adoption files.

Mr Justice Carnwath, sitting in the Queen's Bench Division, so held when dismissing an appeal by a local authority from a refusal by Master McKenzie of its application to set aside a writ of subpoena duces tecum issued on December 13, 1994 and served on the council's director of social services requiring the production of confidential documents relating to the adoption of children in the council's area.

The commissioner accepted for investigation a complaint made in October 1993 of maladministration by a local authority, namely, that it had failed properly to consider the complainant couple as adoptive parents for a second child, and that as a result the complainants had been unable to complete their family.

In connection with the investigation the commissioner asked for a range of information from the local

authority's adoption files, including details of baby girls available for adoption from the time the couple were approved as prospective parents.

The commissioner's reason for wanting that information was in order to make a comparative analysis from other cases and thereby decide if the claimed injustice had been in consequence of maladministration in the complainants' case. However, the local authority was not prepared to disclose the information requested and the commissioner issued the subpoena.

The appeal was heard in chambers but judgment was given in open court with the direction that the names of the local authority and the solicitors concerned should not be disclosed.

Miss Cherie Booth, QC, for the local authority; Miss Geneva Caws, QC, and Mr Paul Brown for the commissioner.

MR JUSTICE CARNWATH said that Miss Booth accepted that the commissioner was entitled to investigate the administrative arrangements made by the authority in dealing with adoption applications and in putting their proposals before the adoption panel, but she submitted that the commissioner could not review the panel's reasoning itself or attempt to second guess the decision the panel took when placing a child with adoptive parents.

However, his Lordship said that the panel did not make a final decision: it made a recommendation

to the adoption agency who in turn would be subject to the court's judgment.

On the main issue of public interest immunity, Miss Booth drew attention to the fact that the council had already provided sufficient information to show that very few cases were comparable to the complainants' and that there were good reasons as to why they were not in fact chosen, either because of their particular circumstances or because there were others who had been waiting longer than they had.

She submitted that if this had been ordinary litigation the commissioner might very well be held to be "fishing" and the claim would be unlikely to survive against the very strong competing claims to confidentiality of adoption matters.

His Lordship said that was not the correct approach. Parliament had not sought to exclude adoption business from the matters subject to the commissioner's scrutiny and indeed the regulations made specific provision for investigation of adoption matters.

There was clear indication of the importance that Parliament attached to the commissioner having the fullest possible access to the relevant records even in sensitive areas such as those relating to child care.

It was vital to public confidence in the commissioner's role that he should be able to carry out a full investigation, so that he could tell those affected that he had full

access to all relevant documents even if for reasons of confidentiality he could not disclose the results to them.

Provided that the commissioner could show that the material was bona fide required for the purpose of the investigation and that he was able and willing to comply with the necessary restrictions on disclosure, then the balance should come down in favour of disclosure.

The commissioner did not challenge the local authority's point that nobody had a right to demand a child for adoption and that the fact that a couple had been approved as an adoptive family did not mean that they could expect to be allocated a child within any particular time scale, or indeed at all.

The commissioner's reference to a "daisy order queue" was no more than an acknowledgement that where all other things were equal and there was more than one family found to be wholly suitable for a particular child, then it might be fair to give preference to the parents who had been waiting the longest.

The commissioner however considered it her duty to satisfy herself from the relevant files that the matter had been dealt with properly in practice.

The appeal was dismissed but the commissioner was invited to reconsider the terms of the subpoena with a view to narrowing the range of documents requested to those which were strictly necessary to complete the investigation.

Version v Bosley
Before Lord Justice Stuart-Smith, Lord Justice Evans and Lord Justice Thorpe
[Judgment March 29]

Grief and bereavement caused by another's negligence were not actionable heads of damages, but damages were recoverable for nervous shock, even if that was partly attributable to the pathological consequences of grief and bereavement.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment (Lord Justice Stuart-Smith dissenting) in dismissing an appeal brought by the defendant, Katherine Bosley, against the decision of Mr Justice Sedley on January 30, 1995 that Peter Vernon, was entitled to recover damages for mental illness. However, the Court of Appeal reduced the amount of damages awarded.

Mr Dermot O'Brien, QC, and Mr Daniel Keane-Higgins for the defendant; Mr David Hunt, QC, and Mr Jonathan Marks, QC, for the plaintiff.

LORD JUSTICE STUART-SMITH, dissenting, said that on August 13, 1982 the plaintiff's daughter, Philippa, aged 7, and Theresa, aged 3, together with a third child, were being driven by the plaintiff's nanny, the defendant, to school.

The defendant lost control of the car and it crashed down a 30ft bank into the fast flowing river which ran alongside the road. The defendant managed to escape but the children were trapped.

The plaintiff and his wife, who both worked nearby, were called to the scene by the police. When they arrived they watched the unsuccessful attempts of the rescue services to retrieve the car and save the children. It had never been disputed that the accident was caused by the defendant's negligence.

The plaintiff's case was presented on the basis that he suffered a severe degree of nervous shock and psychological trauma and subsequently developed a severe post-traumatic stress disorder complicated by a severe grief reaction.

The defendant had throughout accepted that the plaintiff fell into that category of person who could be awarded damages resulting from the nervous shock of witnessing an accident or its immediate aftermath.

Her case was that the plaintiff did not suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, as opposed to a grief reaction, pathological grief disorder, which he would have suffered in any event if he had not witnessed the tragedy, but had been told of it at a distance.

The defendant further contended that the accident and its effect on the plaintiff was not

causative of the collapse of his business but that that was due to other factors and it would have collapsed when it did for the reasons it did irrespective of the accident.

Her case at the trial was that the plaintiff was a Walter Mitty character from the start, failing far more often than he succeeded at each stage of his life, making enemies through his own deficiencies of character and forever blaming others; a man who continuously redefined his extremely modest achievements into a grandiose myth; who, having failed in a succession of employments, had bought at an overvalue an ailing company which was destined to founder for economic reasons and the plaintiff's defects of character, who had consistently with his life-long character blamed the failure of his company on everything and everybody but himself.

His Lordship had reached the clear conclusion that the plaintiff had not discharged the onus which was upon him of proving that the shock of witnessing the accident caused by the defendant's negligence substantially contributed to the illness from which he was suffering. That it did so, or was the initiating cause, without which presumably the other events in his life would not have had the same effect on him, seemed to his Lordship to be speculation and guesswork. Accordingly, his Lordship would allow the appeal.

LORD JUSTICE EVANS said that damages for "normal" grief and suffering were too remote to be recoverable in law. The question in the present case was whether the damage for "normal" grief and the consequences of bereavement had to be discounted from the damages for nervous shock.

That particular issue was not covered in the authorities, and his Lordship would hold that the damages for nervous shock should not be discounted.

Nervous shock suffered in consequence of witnessing an accident involving a loved

one as its primary victim was actionable in law. In principle, damages were recoverable for injury caused partly by the negligence of the defendant, even if there was another cause and the negligence was only a contributory cause. *Bonington Castings v Wardlaw* (1956) AC 613.

Nervous shock, as distinct from grief and other emotional sufferings resulting from bereavement, was a kind of injury which was recognised by the law. Therefore, damages were recoverable for nervous shock caused, or at least contributed to, by actionable negligence of the defendant, notwithstanding that the illness might also have been regarded as a pathological consequence of the bereavement which the plaintiff would have inevitably have suffered.

Such a view of the law had advantages for the trial of cases such as the present one. It was unnecessary to research into the niceties of psychiatric medicine in order to discover whether part, and if so, what part, of the plaintiff's illness should be ascribed to bereavement rather than to the traumatic experience of witnessing the accident.

His Lordship could not see any policy reason for limiting the damages recoverable by a plaintiff who had established the right to sue. If the plaintiff was owed a duty of care, then he should recover damages for the injury which he had sustained.

After all, even if his illness was partly attributable to the pathological consequences of grief and bereavement, it was nevertheless caused by the defendant's negligence, and the policy reason which limited the scope and number of those to whom a duty was owed did not provide equal justification for limiting the damages recoverable by those who could sue.

Furthermore, the practical consequences of the submission for the defendant was as follows. Only a plaintiff who had a close and

loving relationship with the primary victim could recover damages, but the damages would have to be assessed so as to exclude the consequences of the bereavement which the plaintiff must have suffered, if the loved one was killed. In his Lordship's view that would be an unrealistic and artificial exercise.

If the law was, simply, that a plaintiff was entitled to sue could recover damages for mental illness caused or contributed to by his involvement as a secondary victim of the accident, notwithstanding that his illness might also be described as, in part, a pathological grief reaction to the bereavement which he had suffered, then it was unnecessary to embark on the process which the judge, not surprisingly, found both abstract and difficult in the present case.

It was essentially on the issue of the evidence relating to the mental illness of the plaintiff that his Lordship differed from Lord Justice Stuart-Smith.

In his Lordship's judgment, the plaintiff suffered mental injury by reason of the accident and that that was contributed to, if not entirely caused, by the fact that he witnessed its aftermath as he did.

However, in his Lordship's view, that was strictly irrelevant. Mr Justice Sedley had held that witnessing the accident had been the initiating cause of the plaintiff's mental decline which began after the accident and continued thereafter, with further impetus from the subsequent failure of the business in 1989 and the breakdown of his marriage in 1992.

He also found that the failure of the business would not of itself have caused mental illness. There was evidence to support those conclusions and his Lordship did not feel that the Court of Appeal should interfere with them.

Lord Justice Thorpe delivered a judgment agreeing with Lord Justice Evans.

Solicitors: Howard Palmer Grossman, Hermer & Partners, Cardiff; Osborne Clarke, Bristol.

Agreement by shareholders creates constructive trust

Neville and Another v Wilson and Others
Before Lord Justice Nourse, Lord Justice Rose and Lord Justice Aldous
[Judgment March 20]

An informal agreement for the liquidation of a family company by its shareholders and for the division of the company's equitable interest in the shares of another company among themselves was not rendered ineffective by section 53 of the Law of Property Act 1925. Each shareholder's agreement to the liquidation created an implied or constructive trust for the other shareholders so that the requirement for writing was dispensed with by section 53.

The Court of Appeal so held in reserved judgments allowing an appeal by the plaintiffs, Joseph Neville and Eileen Hill, two of the shareholders of J. E. Neville Ltd, from a decision by Mr Justice Morritt in February 1994 that 120 shares in Universal Engineering Co (Ellenmere Park) Ltd were held on trust by two of the defendants, Courtney Wilson and Lilian Neville, for the Crown as bona vacantia. The appeal was allowed on grounds that were not argued before the judge.

Section 53 of the 1925 Act provides: "(1) Subject to the provisions hereinafter contained with respect to the creation of interests in land by parol... (c) a disposition of an equitable interest or trust subsisting at the time of the disposition must be in writing signed by the person disposing of the same..."

"(2) This section does not affect the creation or operation of resulting, implied or constructive trusts..."

Mr E. E. Jacob for the plaintiffs; Mr Simon Barker for the defendants.

LORD JUSTICE NOURSE, giving the judgment of the court, said that in 1969 the shareholders had entered into an agreement with one another for the informal liquidation of the company and thus, as part of it, for the division of the company's equitable interest in the shares in Universal Engineering in proportions corresponding to their existing shareholdings.

The question, which involved consideration of section 53 of the 1925 Act and a point left open by the House of Lords in *Oughtred v IRC* (1960) AC 206, was whether the agreement had the effect of disposing of the company's interests.

Each shareholder had collectively agreed to assign his interest in the other shares of the company's equitable interest in exchange for the assignment by the other shareholders of their interests in his own allotted share. Each individual agreement having been a disposition of a subsisting equitable interest not made in writing, there thus arose the question whether it was rendered ineffectual by section 53.

The simple view was that the effect of each individual agreement was to constitute the shareholder an implied or constructive trustee for the other shareholders, so that the requirement for writing in section 53(1)(c) was dispensed with by subsection (2). That was the view taken by Mr Justice Uppjohn at first instance in *Oughtred v IRC* (1959) Ch 383, 390, and by Lord Radcliffe in the House of Lords at p227.

There was nothing in the speeches in the House of Lords preventing the court from holding that the effect of each individual agreement was to constitute the shareholder an implied or constructive trustee for the other shareholders.

The analysis of Lord Radcliffe, based on the proposition that a

specifically enforceable agreement to assign an interest in property created an equitable interest in the assignee, was unquestionably correct: see *London and South Western Railway Co v Gomm* (1882) 30 ChD 563, 581. A greater difficulty was caused by Lord Denning's dissenting view of the application of section 53(2), with which Lord Cohen had appeared to agree.

Section 53(2) said that subsection (1)(c) did not affect the creation or operation of implied or constructive trusts. Just as in *Oughtred v IRC* the son's oral agreement created a constructive trust in favour of the mother, so here each shareholder's oral or implied agreement created an implied or constructive trust in favour of the other shareholders.

Why then should section 53(2) not apply? No convincing reason had been suggested or had occurred to the court. Moreover, to deny its application would be to restrict the effect of general words such as "assignment" was called for and to lay the ground for fine distinctions in the future. Subsection (2) applied to an agreement such as there was in the instant case.

Thus the agreement entered into by the shareholders was not ineffectual and the plaintiffs were entitled to relief accordingly. That meant that the company's equitable interest in the 120 shares did not vest in the Crown as bona vacantia when the company was struck off the register in 1970, and cash now representing the shares would be divided proportionately between the plaintiffs and the defendants.

On grounds not argued before the judge the appeal was allowed.

Solicitors: Pannone & Partners, Manchester; Stockdale & Reid, North Shields.

Deciding youth's mode of trial on sentencing power

Regina v Inner London Youth Court, Ex parte Director of Public Prosecutions
Before Lord Justice Leggatt and Sir Iain Glidewell
[Judgment March 18]

When deciding mode of trial of a defendant aged between 14 and 17 under section 24(1)(a) of the Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, justices should ask themselves whether a crown court could properly sentence the defendant to a period greater than two years for the offence charged and if so should commit for trial at the crown court.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so stated when allowing an application by the Director of Public Prosecutions for judicial review of a decision of Inner London Youth Court, sitting at Balham, on September 29, 1995 stating that it was more suitable that the charges against C, a youth aged 15, be tried summarily and fixing a date for trial.

C was charged with causing grievous bodily harm with intent contrary to section 18 of the Offences against the Person Act 1861 and an offence of destroying a window contrary to section 1(1) of the Criminal Damage Act 1971.

The decision was quashed and an order of mandamus made requiring the justices to hold committal proceedings.

Mr John McGuinness for the DPP; Mr Gavin Millar for C; the justices did not appear and were not represented.

SIR IAIN GLIDEWELL said that the major issue was the interpretation of the words in section 24(1)(a) "it ought to be

possible to sentence him in pursuance of that subsection".

The proper approach for a court was to ask itself whether it was proper for a crown court sentencing the defendant for the offence of which he was charged to exercise its section 53(2) powers and sentence him to a period greater than two years.

If the answer was "yes", then it inevitably followed that justices or the youth court should make it possible for the crown court to sentence the defendant on that basis by committing for trial. Only if the nature of the offence was such that the crown court could not properly exercise its section 53(2) powers should the justices take the view they should not make it possible for the crown court to pass such a sentence.

It did not necessarily follow that the defendant if convicted would get a sentence greater than two years. But that such a possibility should follow flowed inevitably from the circumstances of the offence as alleged.

When he had to make such decisions with 15 year olds charged with serious offences, the justices, although not obliged by law to do so, would be well advised to seek their clerk's advice concerning the limits of their own powers and the guidance available.

If the court had done so in the present case they would have been referred to *Stone's Justices' Manual* with a footnote to section 24 referring to a number of cases.

Those included *R v Fairhurst* (1986) 1 WLR 1374 from which Mr McGuinness submitted that justices should always start with the view that a section 18 offence was

one of exceptional gravity. The justices had considered the young age of the witnesses and the fact that it was open to the court to discontinue the summary trial and proceed by way of committal. Both were irrelevant considerations.

As a general rule the court would take into account the age of witnesses and the desirability of disposing of the case, but those matters could not weigh against the clear words of section 24(1). If the court was obliged to make it possible for the crown court to convict other considerations became irrelevant.

Lord Justice Leggatt agreed.

Solicitors: Crown Prosecution Service, Special Case Unit; Fisher Meredith, Clapham.

Corrections

In *Begg-McBrearty (Inspector of Taxes) v Stillwell* (The Times March 15) the sixth line onwards of the first paragraph should have read: "... an interest in trust property was created by the exercise of a special power of appointment, contained in a discretionary settlement and was not an interest under an instrument made before January 1, 1970."

In *Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council v B* (The Times March 19) the word "ordinarily" was inadvertently omitted between "not" and "resident" in the third line of both the first and ninth paragraphs.

In *Boote (Inspector of Taxes) v Banco do Brasil SA* (The Times April 2) Mr Timothy Brennan appeared as junior to Mr McCall, QC, for the Crown.

NOTICE TO HALIFAX SAVINGS AND BANKING CUSTOMERS

	UK RATES				NON-RESIDENT RATES				NON-PERSONAL RATES			
	GROSS PA	GROSS CAR	NET PA	NET CAR	GROSS PA	GROSS CAR	NET PA	NET CAR	GROSS PA	GROSS CAR	NET PA	NET CAR
SPECIAL RESERVE BOND*	5.90	-	4.72	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
HALIFAX TESSA 2nd Standard rate	5.65	-	-	-	5.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Matured TESSA*	5.65	-	4.52	-	5.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
BONUS GOLD[®] (including Bonus)												
\$100,000+	5.75	-	4.60	-	5.60	-	5.35	-	4.28	-	-	-
\$50,000+	5.45	-	4.36	-	5.30	-	5.15	-	4.12	-	-	-
\$25,000+	5.25	-	4.20	-	5.10	-	4.95	-	3.96	-	-	-
\$10,000+	5.00	-	4.00	-	4.85	-	4.80	-	3.84	-	-	-
Monthly Income Option (including Bonus)												
\$100,000+	5.62	5.75	4.50	4.58	5.47	5.60	5.23	5.35	4.18	4.26		
\$50,000+	5.33	5.45	4.26	4.34	5.19	5.30	5.04	5.15	4.03	4.10		
\$25,000+	5.14	5.25	4.11	4.18	5.00	5.10	4.85	4.95	3.88	3.94		
\$10,000+	4.90	5.00	3.92	3.98	4.76	4.85	4.71	4.80	3.77	3.83		
SOLID GOLD*												
\$50,000+	4.85	-	3.88	-	4.70	-	4.65	-	3.72	-	-	-
\$25,000+	4.60	-	3.68	-	4.45	-	4.40	-	3.52	-	-	-
\$10,000+	4.10	-	3.28	-	3.95	-	4.10	-	3.28	-	-	-
\$5,000+	3.35	-	2.68	-	3.20	-	3.25	-	2.60	-	-	-
\$500+	3.05	-	2.44	-	2.90	-	2.90	-	2.32	-	-	-
Monthly Income Option												
\$50,000+	4.75	4.85	3.80	3.87	4.60	4.70	4.55	4.65	3.64	3.70		
\$25,000+	4.51	4.60	3.61	3.67	4.36	4.45	4.31	4.40	3.45	3.50		
\$10,000+	4.02	4.09	3.22	3.26	3.88	3.95	4.02	4.09	3.22	3.27		
\$5,000+	3.30	3.35	2.64	2.67	3.15	3.20	3.20	3.25	2.56	2.59		
\$500+	3.01	3.05	2.41	2.43	2.86	2.90	2.86	2.90	2.29	2.31		
LIQUID GOLD*												
\$25,000+	3.70	-	2.96	-	3.55	-	3.45	-	2.76	-	-	-
\$10,000+	3.30	-	2.64	-	3.15	-	3.15	-	2.52	-	-	-
\$5,000+	2.90	-	2.32	-	2.75	-	2.70	-	2.16	-	-	-
\$2,500+	2.70	-	2.16	-	2.55	-	2.45	-	1.96	-	-	-
\$500+	2.45	-	1.96	-	2.30	-	2.20	-	1.76	-	-	-
\$75	0.75	-	0.60	-	0.75	-	0.75	-	0.60	-	-	-
ASSET RESERVE CHEQUE ACCOUNT												
\$50,000+	4.95	5.04	3.96	4.02	4.95	5.04	4.35	4.42	3.48	3.53		
\$25,000+	4.65	4.73	3.73	3.77	4.65	4.73	3.90	3.96	3.12	3.16		
\$10,000+	4.30	4.37	3.44	3.48	4.30	4.37	3.65	3.70	2.92	2.95		
\$5,000+	3.60	3.65	2.88	2.91	3.60	3.65	3.35	3.39	2.68	2.71		
YOUNG SAVERS†												
\$10,000+	3.10	3.12	2.48	2.50	3.10	3.12	-	-	-	-	-	-
MAXIM CURRENT ACCOUNT												
\$2,000+	1.00	1.00	0.80	0.80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$50+	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MAXIM												
Under 21 and Student Maxim†	3.10	3.14	2.48	2.51	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CARDCASE												
\$50+	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
CARDCASE												
Under 21†	3.10	3.12	2.48	2.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
MATURED FUNDS ACCOUNT*												
\$10,000+	3.70	-	2.96	-	3.70	-	3.70	-	2.96	-	-	-
\$2,000+	3.10	-	2.48	-	3.10	-	3.10	-	2.48	-	-	-
Monthly Income												
\$10,000+	3.64	-	2.91	-	3.64	-	3.64	-	2.91	-	-	-
\$2,000+	3.06	-	2.45	-	3.06	-	3.06	-	2.45	-	-	-
TREASURER'S ACCOUNT*												
\$2,500+	4.20	-	3.36	-	-	-	4.20	-	3.36	-	-	-
\$500+	3.65	-	2.92	-	-	-	3.65	-	2.92	-	-	-
\$1+	0.75	-	0.60	-	-	-	0.75	-	0.60	-	-	-
CLOSED ISSUES												
TESSA Gold												
Including maturity bonus	6.15	-	-	-	6.15	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Halifax TESSA*	6.27	-	-	-	6.27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Including maturity bonus	5.65	-	-	-	5.65	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Deposit \$500+	6.46	-	-	-	6.46	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
\$50+	2.20	2.21	1.76	1.77	2.20	2.21	2.20	2.21	1.76	1.77		
Monthly Savings \$500+	0.75	0.75	0.60	0.60	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.60	0.60		
\$50+	2.20	2.21	1.76	1.77	2.20	2.21						
7 Day Xtra \$200+	0.75	0.75	0.60	0.60	0.75	0.75						
Special Investment Account (1st Issue)	1.65	1.66	1.32	1.32	1.65	1.66						
Special Investment Account (2nd Issue)	2.75	2.77	2.20	2.21	2.75	2.77						
5 Year Term Share	2.25	2.26	1.80	1.81	2.25	2.26						
Subscription Share	2.60	2.62	2.08	2.09	2.60	2.62						
Matured Subscription Share	2.20	2.21	1.76	1.77	2.20	2.21						

CHANGES TO RATES

Halifax Building Society announces new rates for certain savings and banking customers from 6th April 1996.

CLOSED ISSUES. If your account is a closed issue (one which is no longer available to new customers) you may close it without losing any interest if you transfer the money into any Halifax account. This does not apply to TESSA Gold and Halifax TESSA.

The rates shown apply to both the deposit and share account versions of these products.

POINTS TO NOTE. Interest will be paid net after the lower rate of income tax (20% from 6th April 1996) has been deducted, unless you have completed a registration form and made a declaration to comply with Inland Revenue regulations. The net rates shown, which are only examples and have been rounded, assume the lower rate of income tax has been taken off. All interest rates quoted may change. Special rates of interest on certain accounts paid to savings and banking customers who appear in our records as being under 21 or have Student Maxim. If your account balance is less than £50 you will not receive any interest unless you appear in our records as being under 21 (or, if your account is a Maxim account, you appear in our records as being under 21 or a student). Compounded annual rates (C.A.R.) apply when full interest remains in your account.†The non-resident rates of interest are payable to individuals who are not ordinarily resident in the UK and who complete an appropriate declaration form. Bonus Gold and Solid Gold non-personal accounts (such as accounts held by clubs, charities and trusts) are no longer available to new customers.

Full account conditions and details of when interest is paid, and how to qualify for the TESSA Gold, Halifax TESSA, Halifax TESSA 2 and Bonus Gold bonuses, are available from any Halifax branch.



FILM 1

Scotland's ebullient youth culture — a current cinematic obsession — is explored again in *Small Faces*



FILM 2

The feel-bad movie of the year? *Swimming With Sharks* shows Hollywood at its most sour

THE TIMES
ARTS



FILM 3

Nadja gives many a quirky twist to the world of vampires, stakes and unhealthy appetites



FILM 4

Don't get caught in the crops... yes, Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* is back in a fine new print

CINEMA: Geoff Brown sees Scotland's reputation for quality product upheld by Gillies MacKinnon's *Small Faces*

Triumph sealed with a Glasgow kiss

Thirty years and more ago, British cinema gave itself a much-needed blood transfusion by going north. In *Room at the Top*, *A Taste of Honey* and other trophies of the British New Wave, film-makers discovered Lancashire accents, slag-heaps, factory chimneys, cobbled streets and mist hovering over canals.

Now British cinema ventures further north for its rejuvenation. To Scotland. Films such as *Shallow Grave* and *Trainspotting* feed off the raw energy of Scottish people and the urban landscape. In *Small Faces*, the latest and best film from Gillies MacKinnon, written with his brother Billy, the camera feasts on Glasgow's housing blocks, marooned in wasteland: on a front door's lurid coloured glass; on the pin-ups in a teenager's room.

Small Faces
Warner West End
18, 108 mins
Marvellous evocation of a Glasgow childhood

Swimming with Sharks
MGM Haymarket
15, 90 mins
Kevin Spacey in a jet-black Hollywood satire

Nadja
ICA Cinema, 100 mins
Offbeat adventures of Dracula's offspring

North by Northwest
Lumiere, PG, 136 mins
Hitchcock's thriller, as entertaining as ever

ledge and is so sour about Hollywood that it makes Altman's *The Player* seem like a valentine.

What do you do when your dad is Dracula? This is the heroine's problem in *Nadja*, a slow but mesmerising American independent movie from Michael Almereyda. His last film, *Another Girl, Another Planet*, used a cheap Fisher-Price toy camera to create fractured, dream-like images. *Nadja*, shot in black-and-white, uses the same disorientating technique for *Nadja*'s vampire urges as she moves through the night in contemporary New York.

Nadja wishes she did not have a blood lust; but family ties are not easily broken, least of all by the stake driven through her father's heart. "Dad's dead," *Nadja* tells her estranged twin, Edgar — a difficult line to say with a flourish. Indeed Elina Löwensohn, a dark European presence in several Hal Hartley films, impresses most when she stays silent and lets her mask-like face do the work.

Löwensohn is not the only cast member with an offbeat pedigree. Van Helwing, the dedicated vampire hunter, is fancifully portrayed by Peter Fonda, cycling round Manhattan in Victorian clothes, while David Lynch, the executive producer, lends his own zombie presence to the tiny role of a morgue attendant.

But for all the self-conscious style and convoluted plot twists, the film pays respect to genre conventions. Most current horror piles up so much gross-out spectacle that daily life is left behind; but as *Dracula*'s brood wrestles with its inheritance you realise anew how close horror can take you to the basic facts of love and desire, pain and death.

I have seen Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* numerous times, but never before this revival have I taken such note of the yellow boxer shorts that Cary Grant reveals as he changes clothes in a hotel room. They appear so bright in this new 35mm print that they almost burn your eyes.

The film's playful story influenced later spy capers, although no successor could match Hitch's ingenuity, the droll wit of Ernest Lehman's script, or Bernard Herrmann's turbulent music. And for sheer entertainment, *North by Northwest* still delivers. Treat yourself.



Out on the town: Bobby (Stephen Duffy) joins the Glen gang in the recreated streets of 1960s Glasgow in Gillies MacKinnon's *Small Faces*

reholders
ive trust

The script may not be directly autobiographical, but the MacKinnon brothers clearly write from the heart, and the cast, chosen largely from Glasgow teenagers, does full justice to their creations. There is no mistaking the plucky spirit of Iain Robertson's *Lex*, the peacock vanity of Garry Sweeney's Sloan, or the free-wheeling violence of Kevin McKidd's Malky, his face adorned with ever more cuts, bumps and plasters as the minutes pass.

Satires about Hollywood do not get much darker than *Swimming with Sharks*, an awkward but notable first feature by George Huang, made in 1994 under the title *The Buddy Factor*. Its late arrival in this country testifies to its bleak spirit: this is the "feel-bad" movie par excellence.

Kevin Spacey plays Buddy Ackerman, a monstrous studio executive who delights in tearing assistants to shreds, and Frank Whaley's Guy is perfect shredding material. But the worm finally turns and pays Ackerman back with physical violence. The multiple abuse is painful to watch: the more so since Spacey adopts no comic inflections, even when yelling. "My badmat means more to me than you!"

Huang adopts a plain visual style. Words and plot count here. There are some structural flaws, and Huang does not know how to handle the one woman character, a wily producer. But the film bristles enjoyably with inside know-

'By lads about lads'



Every week young film fans discuss the new releases.

SMALL FACES
Katherine Wright, 18: An uncompromising film punctuated with wry humour, but pacey and poignant.

Suzie Gilbert, 18: An intelligent film by lads about lads. Perceptive and funny. However, at times, perhaps it was a film just for the lads.

Andrew Gillman, 21: Another good Scottish film that may be left trailing in the wake of *Trainspotting*. There was the same reversal of emotions from happiness to depression, and comfort to shock. Well directed but probably 20 minutes too long.

Jenny Dawson, 20: The balance of wit and violence made it a great film. Humorous and disturbing, although perhaps padded in places. Well worth seeing.

SWIMMING WITH SHARKS
Katherine: Inane. A plot bereft of intrigue and originality. Insipid cast.

Suzie Gilbert: The cast of three is meant to represent the whole of Hollywood in this frustratingly repetitive film, which delivers nothing new to the idea of "It's a tough road to the top".

Andrew: A well-written film with excellent acting, especially by Kevin Spacey.

Jenny Dawson: The weakness of Guy (Frank Whaley) made me cringe and I was bored by the repetitive scenes. The tedium was only lifted through the final twist.

NADJA
Katherine: Dark and depressing. Convoluted storyline, non-compelling characters, although the occasional bland joke gave relief.

Suzie: No surprise to find out that David Lynch was associated with this film. The superb use of sound, and black and white film, didn't hide the fact that this was an embarrassment in every other respect.

Andrew: I found my concentration slipping because the action moved too slowly. An average film enhanced by the chilling sound-effects.

Jenny: With regard to cinematography and choice of sound track, *Nadja* had potential. Unfortunately, the casting and sadistic humour did little to pick up the slow pace.

Ros Drinkwater meets the man who spurned a big name for *Small Faces*

Gillies MacKinnon has made his reputation with a series of films praised for their honesty and social realism, but he is probably best known as the man who turned down the chance to direct Marlon Brando. "It's a great story," he admits, "but very misleading and so embarrassing. I'd give my eye teeth to direct Brando, but when he asked me I was fully committed to *Small Faces*."

At the age of 28 ("in search of one big last adventure") he went to Africa and joined a tribe of Tuaregs carrying milk 500 miles across the Sahara. "I had the idea to make a film from stills images of the desert, but the camera jammed. The Tuaregs didn't know what to make of me — my coat over my head, trying to push the film through the camera by hand. The whole idea was doomed."

Sorry, Marlon, I'm too busy

Back in London he worked as a cartoonist, returned to teaching and finally, at the age of 34, enrolled at the National Film School, "a case of now or never". A year later, after graduation, he found himself in Hollywood, where his film school tutors, Shane Connaughton and Kerry Crabbe insisted he be hired to direct their script for *The Playboys*, starring Albert Finney. The movie was a hit and MacKinnon accepted an offer from Steve Martin to direct *A Simple Twist of Fate*, Martin's film treatment of *Silas Marner*. He describes his time in Hollywood as "a three-year love affair", but eventually, homesick for his wife Frances and their two young daughters, and itching to make *Small Faces*, he headed back to Britain.

He wrote the script for *Small Faces* with Billy, his younger brother. Billy was in Australia, script-writing Jane Campion's *The Piano*. So the brothers wrote the script by fax. From the outset they had decided to do it on a shoestring, rather than face casting compromises.

Small Faces probably owes its existence to the deep impression made on MacKinnon by the Italian classic, *Rocco and His Brothers*. "Who should be at the Edinburgh Film Festival but Suco Cecchi D'Amico, its co-author? My daughter tells me that at one point I was literally on my knees to this 80-year-old lady, saying 'Please come and see our film, you were such an influence on us.' It was only then that it dawned on him that a scene in his film, where a young boy steals a shirt, was lifted straight from *Rocco*."

"It was completely unconscious. I said, 'Look, I'm really sorry about this,' and she said: 'I do it all the time. When you see something you love, it becomes your own, so you can't steal it.' Which I thought was a pretty generous statement."

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HERITAGE

A stunning new museum is just one delight of Copenhagen's year as Europe's cultural capital



PUBLISHING

Hans Christian Andersen for 60p: Penguin launches its bid to woo thrifty children

THE TIMES ARTS

OPERA

Limp direction does a disservice to Gluck in Scottish Opera's new staging of *Alceste*

TOMORROW

Passions of centuries: why Good Friday has inspired great composers of every age

OPERA

Gluck done no favours

IT IS brave indeed of Scottish Opera to mount a new production of *Alceste*. Gluck's opera is notoriously difficult to bring off and, since it is about nobility of spirit and self-sacrifice, very much a "period piece". Apart from the musical and vocal challenges, it needs a great deal of help from a director. If the mood of unremitting gloom is not to grow a mite oppressive. In the first act Admetus is dying and Alceste resolves to die in his place; in the second they argue about which of them will perish; and in the third they repeat the arguments at the gates of the underworld.

Help is precisely what it didn't get on Tuesday from the producer-designer Yannis Kokkos. The chorus, limply directed, was dressed in black throughout; lighting was dim, decor nondescript, blocking unimaginative. In no sense did the concept match the grandeur of Gluck's vision. The dreaded name Figure of Death appeared in the cast list; this was the (not very good) choreographer giving herself something to do, though in hogging the stage at both the first and third-act curtains she was giving herself a great deal too much to do. Enough: this dismal affair

Alceste
Theatre Royal,
Glasgow

is a co-production with the Opera de Nice, whither it should be dispatched as swiftly as possible on a strictly one-way basis.

The soloists, then, were out there on their own. Isabelle Vernet is one of the great white hopes of French singing. A pupil of Régine Crespin, she looks like her mentor — a fine, upright presence — and indeed sounds like her. Her soprano is full and luscious and she phrases with plangent eloquence, especially when singing softly. But, as with Crespin, the sound can grow strident under pressure at the top; Ah, *malgré moi* started beautifully but the outburst of terror at the end — admittedly driven at breakneck speed by Nicholas McGegan, the conductor — fell less than easily upon the ear.

Mark Padmore's Admetus was smoothly, a touch bloodlessly, phrased in decent French, but Matthew Best's High Priest (doubling as Apollo, who slouched around in a black raincoat and Homburg hat) gave everyone a lesson in pungent projection. The corpses were strongly cast. Lisa Milne, especially lovely in *Perez vs. Fritz*, Matthew Elton Thomas's Hercules was defeated by the production.

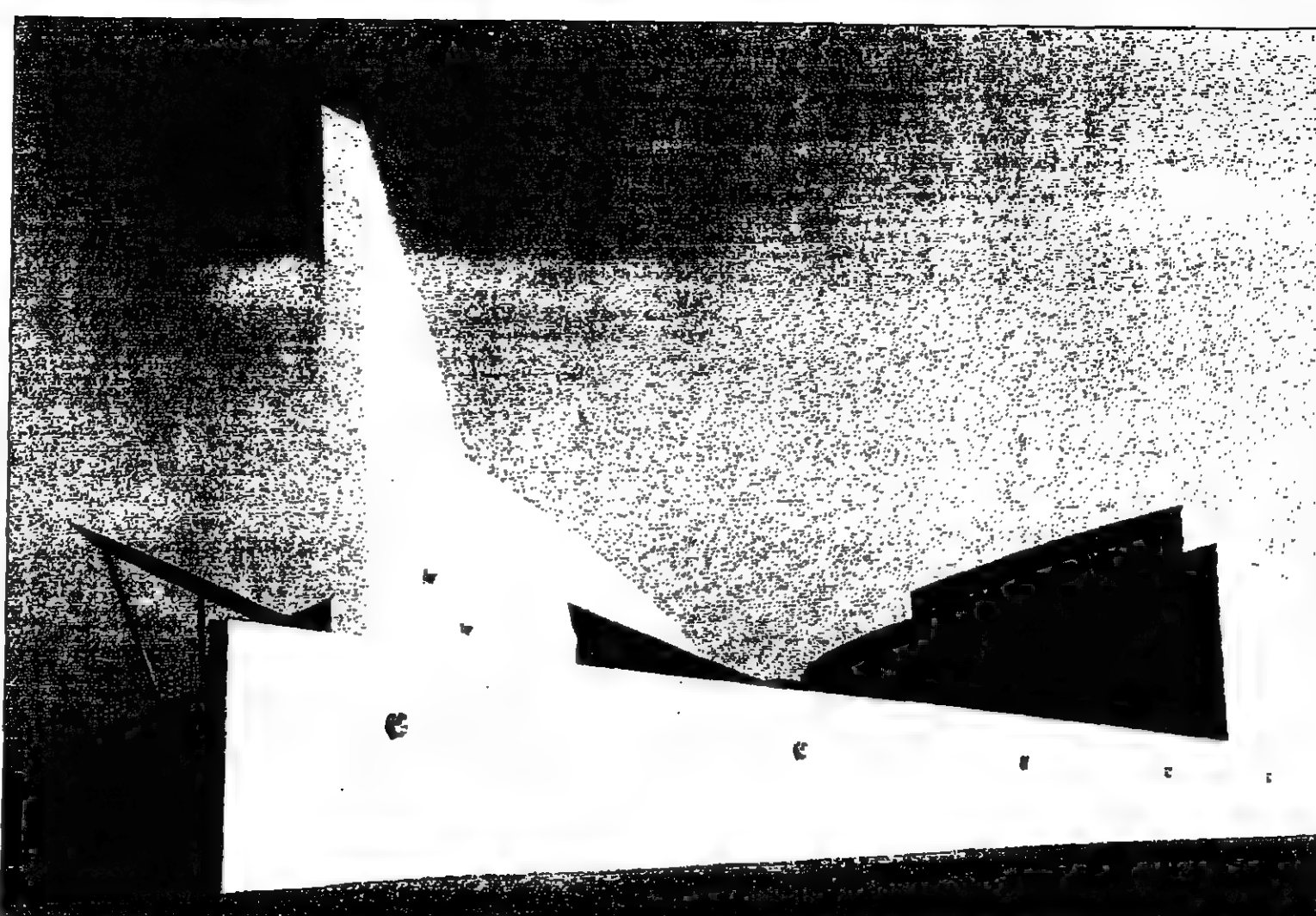
McGegan's reading of the score was, of course, innocent of portentousness, but not quite as lively as expected. The sound was string-heavy, the wind tending to get lost in the Theatre Royal's deep pit. The hideous danger in Gluck of "saw-saw", "plod-plod" was not entirely avoided, and one longed for more accentuation of the actual shape of the phrases.

In a good performance *Alceste* — or so its supporters (I am one) maintain — can be one of the most uplifting of experiences. In a less than good performance it can come perilously close to tedium.

RODNEY MILNES

Copenhagen is putting on a class act as 'Cultural Capital of Europe', Barry Millington writes

Here for the Dane attraction



Arken, the new Museum of Modern Art, looms out of the seascape at Ishøj, south of Copenhagen. Its two auditoriums are already heavily booked

In Denmark they are talking about Søren Robert Lund's stunning new design for the Museum of Modern Art in the same breath as the Sydney Opera House (also built by a Dane). It is indeed a sensational concept: looming out of the seascape at Ishøj, 20 kilometres south of Copenhagen, the new museum, Arken, resembles a huge ocean liner with its repertoire of nautical motifs.

Arken opened last month with an exhibition of the Expressionist painter Emil Nolde, but the two auditoriums installed (one a cinema/conference room) are already heavily booked for chamber music and piano recitals, even opera. Per Nørgaard's *Det Guddommelige Tivoli* (The Divine Circus) was performed by an avant-garde ensemble from St Gall at the end of March, and a series of performances of Niels Rosing-Schow's new opera *Dommen* has just been announced for October.

The latter is an initiative of the Royal Danish Opera, which is thriving under its British director Elaine Padmore. The chief problem for this opera house is the enviable one of not having enough seats for clamouring patrons. "You cannot get tickets for the opera," Klas Sjöblom, Padmore's associate opera director, told me.

The theatre holds only 1,360 people, and after subscription sales, there are usually some 50 tickets available per performance. Government subsidies of 90 per cent enable them to offer tickets ranging from £5 to £30 and opera audiences in Copenhagen are refreshingly unstuffy. Accusations of metropolitan favouritism have been countered by tours to outlying Jutland.

Before Padmore, the Opera was insular in its outlook: works were usually performed in Danish, by native singers, and the local orchestral and conducting talent left something to be desired. Danish singers still provide the backbone of the roster — with rising stars such as Poul Elming, Eva Johansson and Tina Kiberg — that is a reasonable policy. But nowadays opera is generally performed in the original language, with superlatives; moreover, the average age of the orchestra has dropped (through natural wastage) by 15 to 17 years in recent times, and conductors are more frequently brought in from abroad.

"We're not trying to internationalise the house and do away with the ensemble. We bring in the people we need to do special projects," says Sjöblom. On the other hand, Danish Opera undoubtedly does have an eye to its international reputation, a reputation that is likely to be consolidated next month with the first *Forza del destino* for 60 years and, in the autumn, a Meisner-singer that boasts only one guest artist ("a glorious example of what we can do with our ensemble," enthuses Padmore).

Sjöblom also has special responsibility for the Opera's orchestra — the Royal Danish Orchestra (Det Kongelige Kapel), founded in 1448

and boasting the longest history of any orchestra in Europe — which devotes four weeks of its annual season to concerts. But the leading ensemble in the country is the Danish National Radio Symphony Orchestra, which undertakes major tours and recording projects (currently with Decca, Chandos and dacapo). This year Copenhagen is Cultural Capital of Europe (K96 is the shorthand) and everybody is pulling out the stops. Per Erik Weng, managing director of the Danish National RSO, sees it as two-way traffic: "We have tried to combine Europe coming to Copenhagen and Copenhagen to Europe."

Thus visitors to Copenhagen can experience a six-concert Stockhausen festival (September/October, including the latest instalment of the great man's operatic extravaganza, *Freitag*), or performances of Schoenberg's *Gurrelieder* in November (under Janowski), or Mahler's "Resurrection" Symphony in December (under Sinopoli), or a semi-staged version of Berg's *Lulu* in the Royal Riding School at Christiansburg Palace (August/September). But the orchestra will also be taking part in the Great Orchestras of the World series at the Barbican in the autumn, and it will be travelling with its concert performance of Denmark's

national opera, Nielsen's *Maskarade*, from Copenhagen to Vienna and Brussels.

This performance of *Maskarade*, and the subsequent recording for Decca, will use the new scholarly edition which has been one of the most urgent undertakings of the Carl Nielsen Edition, a project launched in August 1994 with generous back-

There aren't enough seats for the clamouring opera patrons?

ing from the Ministry of Culture (a partnership inconceivable in Britain). Astonishingly, there is currently no published score of *Maskarade* at all: conductors hitherto have had to work from photocopies of the manuscript score.

The project to be published by Hansen) will also provide for vocal scores and instrumental parts, and according to Niels Martin Jensen, the editor-in-chief, they "are striving very hard to combine the practical with

the scholarly" — not, surprisingly, a priority of other complete editions one could name. New technology will also be harnessed, CD-Rom being used to show manuscript variants and so on.

An organisation crucial to K96 — and another to put its British counterpart to shame — is the Danish Music Information Centre. Funded by the Government, MIC, as it is affectionately known, operates from well-equipped premises, with a staff of a dozen or more. It offers the facility to inspect scores (Simon Rattle spent a morning there some time ago), to hear the music, and to research all aspects of Danish musical life.

Thanks in large part to a generous system of subsidy for new commissions — some senior composers are even paid a salary by the state — contemporary music is flourishing in Denmark. This month has seen the Third Composers' Biennale of the Danish Composers' Society, featuring more than 80 works by Danish and Nordic composers in a series of 23 concerts given by immensely talented native ensembles and soloists.

The healthy musical climate owes a good deal to the Music Act, passed by the Danish Parliament in 1990. The Act made provision for subsidising, among other things, musical tuition,

with the result that there are now some 230 music schools in the country. The irony that musical education is being dismantled as fast in Britain as it is being nurtured in Denmark is almost too cruel to contemplate.

One further aspect of the Danes' enlightened thinking concerns recording. There are three major companies — dacapo, Kontrapunkt and Danacord — and a variety of smaller ones. Dacapo receives a subsidy from the Government which enables it — indeed obliges it — to create an anthology of Danish music, however uncommercial.

The results include the recent releases of Friedrich Künzen's delightful Early Romantic opera *Holger Danske*, a forthcoming series of Late Romantic works by Louis Glass, Otto Malling, C.F.E. Horneman and the like, and a further series of Danish operas and musicals.

Even without K96, Danish musical culture is one of the most thriving and upwardly mobile in Europe today. By the time it is all over, there will be no excuse for anyone who still thinks of the Danish capital exclusively in terms of the Little Mermaid statue and the Tivoli amusement park.

CONCERT

Tribute to fine cellist

THREE admired classics of the chamber-music repertory were played by the Brindisi Quartet as a belated 80th birthday tribute to the cellist William Pleeth, long esteemed as a soloist and ensemble player as well as teacher. The late Jacqueline du Pré was one of his pupils, and her memorial research fund for multiple sclerosis benefited from the concert proceeds.

Pleeth, who was present among three generations of his family, also taught his son Anthony, and he on this occasion took his father's former partner as the distinctive second cello needed for Schubert's great C Major Quintet (D956), which many rank as the finest of its kind. Here we were treated to playing of assertiveness at the outset.

Brindisi Quartet
Wigmore Hall

every stroke of the bows giving full value to the music's volatile subject-matter.

In the sublime Adagio movement, the dialogue between Jacqueline Shave's first violin and Anthony Pleeth's second cello was well developed, while the inward feeling generated by all the players had a stealthy beauty to which the passionately dramatic central section was an exciting contrast. Spiritual calm was restored in the gentle rise and fall of a haunting, palpitating melody.

Trevor Pinnock joined three Brindisi players as the pianist for Mozart's G Minor Piano Quartet (K478). His crisp and buoyant keyboard technique is better suited to the older fortepiano or harpsichord than the modern grand, which here tended to over-dominate the strings in a performance best enjoyed for the players' skill in the building and release of tension.

Their vigorous interplay of sociable musical dialogue, tempered by fluid phrasing and a notably poised elegance in slow music, was also to be enjoyed in the unusual innovations of Haydn's C Major Quartet (Op 54, No 2). Here the first violin's high-lying passages in the opening movement, and the player's impassioned decoration of the following movement's theme, were but the most obvious elements in a distinctive performance.

NOEL GOODWIN

You're never too young for the 60's

Penguin's bite-sized repackaging of literature great and small is becoming child's play. Nicolette Jones reports



Lewis Carroll is among the authors whose priceless prose will be on sale at 60p

When Penguin celebrated its 60th birthday with 60 little books for 60p, it was meant to be a one-off commemorative gesture. But that was before the public turned out to have such an appetite for nibbles of Nietzsche and tastes of Tacitus. Before long the bestseller lists were clogged up with titles that rival publishers bitterly dismissed as "pamphlets". Then Phoenix House retaliated in kind, and we are about to hear the patter of tiny metrical feet from Faber's 60p poetry list.

Penguin, too, knew better

than to leave things at that. They have produced further sets of 60's in the genres of cookery, biography, travel and classics, and now, inevitably, since smallness of price and format suggest it, children's books. The first 30 children's 60's are published today, this being the week of International Children's Day and Hans Christian Andersen's 191st birthday. You can celebrate both in style by buying the boxed set for £20.

Like the 60's themselves, the children's 60's are not entirely a new idea. Dover Thrift Editions and Wordsworth

Editions preceded 60's with something very similar for less than £1. Collectable, pocket money-priced children's paperbacks have also, not unexpectedly, tempted the penicils out of hot little hands before — in everything from small Ladybird hardbacks to Banana Books, illustrated stories for six to nine-year-olds, by the best of contemporary writers.

The new Penguin set is distinct because it admits to being aimed at adults. "These are books about which adults would think: 'We'd like the children to have these and I would like to read it myself.'"

says Philippa Milne-Smith, Penguin's children's books publisher.

This means that the authors who have been chosen are mostly ones that adults would recognise, although the selection, aimed at children aged eight and over (principally because they're not illustrated), sets out to have a broad spectrum, a historical span, a variety of genres and an international mix. So Andersen's *Little Mermaid* is there, alongside Greek myths from Roger Lancelyn Green, episodes from Kipling, Lewis Carroll, Mark Twain and Conan Doyle, foreign classics such as *The Moonchildren*, *Mrs Pepperpot* and *Pippi Longstocking*, poetry from Michael Rosen, a snatch of Roald Dahl's autobiography, and a smattering of contemporary writers: Anne Fine, Philip Ridley, Paul Jennings, Jon Scieszka. It does not claim to be canonical. Like the adult 60's, where Dick Francis rode alongside Marcus Aurelius, it's a something-for-everyone smorgasbord.

What it may not do, unlike its adult counterpart, is change reading habits: none of these authors would be a surprise entry to the bestseller lists. And are these snippets for a generation with a short attention span? Milne-Smith says no. "Many kids' paperbacks are 10,000 to 12,000 words," she says. "What is said is that when Allen Lane first published Penguins, sixpence bought the whole thing. In the 1960s, full-length Puffin Books emphasised affordability. Now our bargains are really only tasters."

New York, Summer 1954.
One man is dead.
The life of another
is at stake.

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ROBERT EAST
TONY HAYGARTH
TIM HEALY
MARI RICHARDSON
MAY MURPHY
DOUGLAS MCFERRAN
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Max Oppenheimer's 1926 portrait of Thomas Mann

A Mann for all seasons

Daniel Johnson on three diverse portraits of a writer who attempted to shape his life as he had shaped his art

Thomas Mann was "the last great European man of letters". These three biographies are an acknowledgement of the magnitude of Mann's achievement; yet his work has never been very popular in this country.

This is not just because it was translated, for the most part execrably, by Mrs Lowe-Porter, one of the many importunate American ladies in his orbit. Even those of his British contemporaries who were sympathetic to German culture remained curiously indifferent to Mann: D. H. Lawrence dismissed him as a repressed, cold-blooded naturalist; most other English writers ignored him. His daughter Erika had a marriage of convenience with W. H. Auden, but they had nothing in common except a homosexuality they never discussed.

Except during the Battle of Britain, Mann harboured typical German prejudices against the English: they were a nation of shopkeepers, England was a land without music. Towards other nations he was less indifferent: France and Italy he equated with Latin civilisation, decadent but fertile, and Russia with Slavonic sensuality; America, where he lived in exile for 13 years, aroused his admiration and, during the McCarthyite period, a somewhat exaggerated alarm.)

He loved Shakespeare, but ignored modern English literature. On a rare

visit to Britain in 1924, Mann enjoyed Galsworthy's hospitality. One might have expected the author of *Buddenbrooks* to have esteemed the author of *The Forsyte Saga*; but Hayman says Mann thought his host not quite a gentleman. Worse, Galsworthy was insufficiently "spiritual". This vignette hints at why Mann has never achieved cult status here: he was an intellectual among novelists, a particularly Teutonic aesthete, and rather a snob besides.

So do any of these biographies help English readers to enter Mann's gloriously imaginative literary world? Donald Prater's *A Life* is finely nuanced, fair-minded and well-researched, from which his subject emerges with considerable credit. Prater is good on the monumental public persona that Mann created for himself, the way in which he consciously modelled himself on Goethe by leading a "representative" life which was itself a work of art.

Throughout his elegantly written account, Prater evokes the irony which renders Mann's greatest novels — *Buddenbrooks*, *The Magic Mountain* and *Doctor Faustus* — the apotheosis and the damnation of the old bourgeois Europe he loved. Prater portrays an Olympian mag-

THOMAS MANN

A Life

By Donald Prater

OUP, £25

THOMAS MANN

By Ronald Hayman

Bloomsbury, £25

THOMAS MANN

Eros and Literature

By Anthony Heilbut

Picador, £25

namity, with which Mann himself might well have been satisfied.

Ronald Hayman's more informal biography would not have pleased him at all. It is an indictment of the Mann family, and especially Thomas's treatment of his six children, all of whom Hayman thinks were damaged by their father. The three most talented — Erika, Klaus and Golo — grew up to be homosexual; Klaus and Michael both died by their own hands.

In the case of Klaus, Thomas's conduct barely stopped short of child abuse: he was unable to disguise his unhealthy interest in his son's adolescent beauty. The incestuous longings

of his elder brother Heinrich are partly blamed for the suicide of their sister Carla. Their other sister Julia also killed herself. Only his wife, Katia, and his daughter, Elisabeth, seem to have survived unscathed.

It was an accursed clan, and Thomas's cool reactions to the many catastrophes were typical of the egoist he undoubtedly was. Yet the early demise of his own father, which precipitated him into a literary rather than a mercantile career and provided him with the climax of *Buddenbrooks*, established an enduring pattern of transfiguring pain into prose. Death, disease and disorder were all grist to the slowly grinding mill. This is a gossipary warts-and-all biography, but even so its subject remains endearing.

Anthony Heilbut's forthcoming book is, as its subtitle suggests, a biographical study of Mann's works in the light of his sexuality. It is strident in tone, unsubtle in content, uncritical in analysis of Mann's evasions, moral and political. But it has some value as an apology for Mann's "half-open closet" mentality, at a time when homosexual campaigners are aggressively denying the legitimacy of such a stance. Heilbut speaks for those who would

enlist Mann to their cause, rather than those who would abjure him.

Both Hayman and Heilbut have relied more heavily than Prater on the principal source that has come to light since Mann's death: his voluminous, though fragmentary, diaries. Most of the diaries fell into Nazi hands — causing Mann great anxiety — but they then disappeared from sight until after the war. Their confessional content is less shocking to our eyes than to his — his homosexuality was of a cerebral, Platonic kind — but they leave no doubt about the strength of his passions even in old age.

Is it right, though, to pay more attention to the author of the diaries than to the author of the novels and stories? Mann had a very eventful life, but most of it was spent at his desk. By his death he had become the most famous living German. Had he not been such a slave to the North German Protestant work ethic, had he not produced those infinitely complex sentences, comprising a vast corpus which remains the most extended of all meditations on the culture of the West, Thomas Mann would now share the oblivion into which his brother Heinrich's works have fallen. For his psychology, one should read Hayman; for his sexuality, Heilbut; but to understand what he accomplished, read Prater.

Symbol of life, not of blame

In the Ashmolean Museum collection there is a Greek vase known as the "Pandora Pot" which depicts a hammer-holding man and a woman with outstretched arms. The woman is clearly labelled as Pandora, the character best known for her box in which all the evils of the world were once held. The man bears the name Epimetheus, the less famous mythical figure whose ill-advised marriage to Pandora unlocked the box, released the evils and guaranteed that mankind would never again have a wholly happy day.

To a small group of non-hardworking students in the Oxford of 1970 the interpretation of this scene was no great challenge. Pandora was obviously raising her hands in supplicant apology for spoiling everybody else's lives: Epimetheus was wondering whether or not to smash her round the head with his hammer. I recall a lively discussion in which one of the many proto-feminists of that time spoke about proto-wifebeating and about the pernicious mythology, stretching from Adam and Eve to the Iroquois Indians, in which women were blamed for everything.

Peter Stothard

UNDERSTANDING GREEK SCULPTURE

By Nigel Spivey

Thames and Hudson, £25

It is hard to review a book called *Understanding Greek Sculpture* without recalling this and all the other many misunderstandings that litter our pasts. Nigel Spivey, curator of the Cambridge University Museum, can be congratulated for bringing the latest scholarship lightly to bear here on a wonderful range of aesthetic and archaeological issues, including the Greeks' first woman who has so long confused the most learned of scholars as well as the least.

Pandora formed part of what was arguably the greatest of all Athenian sculptures. Pheidias's Athena Parthenos, which stood in famous splendour on the 5th-century Acropolis, was a statue designed to demonstrate the virtue, glory and moral power of the goddess Athena's city.

Various answers are available. The first, to which Spivey

is most attracted, is that the sculptor chose Pandora for his own promotional purposes. According to myth, the designer-deity, Hephaistos, had made the first woman himself and ensured that her dangerous nature was cloaked in the most artful beauty at his command. For Pheidias "to liken his own work to that of Hephaistos might have been an irresistible temptation".

The second is that the city fathers of Athens did not much care which myths decorated their statues. That seems unlikely. The main purpose of the Acropolis was Imperial preening. For this single piece Pheidias was given more than a thousand kilogrammes of gold, worth around £9 million at today's prices, every gram of it gouged from the city's new subject empire and displayed to keep that empire in place.

Spivey provides a provocative introduction to the issue of how much freedom Athenian sculptors could exercise in comparison with their Hellenistic and Renaissance successors. We can reasonably doubt whether any government, committing so much of its gold reserves in this way, would leave the motifs of the work to artistic caprice.

A third answer, one frequently available to scholars of classical sculpture, is that the problem does not properly exist: that the Pandora story is not represented on the Parthenos at all. The statue itself certainly no longer exists. Even most stone figures of ancient Greece are known now only from later copies: a massive work of gold and ivory had no chance of survival. Although the travel-writer, Pausanias, reporting in the 2nd century AD, says that the Pandora myth was shown on the Parthenos, all surviving copies are obscure.

The fourth answer, to which Spivey refers only briefly, is that Pheidias and his fellow Athenians saw Pandora in a wholly different way: indeed, that they may have reacted to the allegation that a woman brought all evil to mankind in a similar manner to that of my



Despite appearances, Epimetheus's intentions may not be as violent as they seem: from the "Pandora Pot", 450-430 BC

proto-feminist friends in the Ashmolean.

The standard Pandora myth is found first in the works of the poet, Hesiod, in around 700 BC. It is Hesiod, possibly following the same prehistoric storyline that gave us the Garden of Eden, who made woman into a species of treacherous creatures whose job was to bring vengeance to mankind for taking stolen fire from Olympus.

Two hundred years later, however, that may not have been the only Pandora legend

at Athens, or not its most important part. By then the defining element of the Greeks' first woman was that she received an individual attribute at her creation from each god and goddess: her very name in Greek meant the recipient of all gifts.

The cult of the unmarried maiden, bearing the benefits of life and earth, was central to Athenians at their civilised height. Their forefathers used to celebrate the annual return of spring by hammering on the frozen ground to release

the earth spirits. Sometimes the spirits came from earthenware pots: such is the most likely meaning of the "Pandora Pot" and probably too of the Parthenos decoration.

There was a woman-hating tradition but it was neither dominant nor the only one. Sophocles, representing a softer culture than Hesiod, wrote a play called *Pandora, or, The Hammerers*. The husband's hammer which so alarmed a few ill-informed students in Oxford 25 years ago was not as threatening as we thought.

Understanding Greek sculpture is not essential to modern life. But it is essential to understanding how art relates to the rest of what exists in the world. This truth, at least, is widely agreed. If anyone wants today to see the "Pandora Pot", it is currently on tour in Dallas, Texas. The best full-size reproduction of the Parthenos is in Nashville, Tennessee: there is a smaller one in Toronto.

The author is The Editor of The Times

Getting wise to Emma

Tania Glyde

FIRST TIME

By Lara Harte

Phoenix House, £14.99

If you ask me, the middle-class upbringing is just about the biggest curse a parent can put on a child after actual abuse. Before you scream, remember that growing up isn't about being over-protected, passing tests and cultivating the right sort of people, it's about learning to deal with the real world, and not arriving at adulthood convinced you're better than 90 per cent of the population.

The 19-year-old author of *First Time* explores this issue, with great effect and simplicity, in one of its most potent arenas: among 14-year-old girls at a "good" Dublin school. The aptly named Cassandra's parents are well-off and she's a bit of a loner, always has been. Along comes new girl Emma, from a poorer suburb. Dark, raty-haired Emma has everything blonde Cassandra would like to have: cool clothes, experience of drink, cigarettes, spiff and boys, and a laissez-faire attitude to homework. She's streetwise, in other words, Cassandra introduces Emma to the rebels of the class, one of whom later tells Emma how important it is to have lots of tests so you can brush up your weakest subjects. The meaning of "cred" fast makes itself known to Cassandra's amazement and the two of them become best friends.

And so Cassandra meets Emma's mates, has her first drink, her first vile, kiss with dogbreath Kevin, and so on. Reading this, I'd almost forgotten just how wearisome the minutiae of female communication can be. The particular brand of cynicism, the particular angle of a turned back in relation to level of scorn displayed; the choke-chain of paranoia when exposed to the boys that controls us from our first period and before. But this author knows how important that is when you're 14. At that age, our sensitivity to the nuances of self-image should turn every woman into a poet. (But somehow it doesn't).

So you just know, when Cassandra lends the larger, better-developed Emma her favourite waistcoat for the Ashford Disco, that it'll come back stretched, and ruined. And, subtly, creepingly, it's downhill all the way after that. Cassandra desperately wants to see the best in Emma's every move but she just doesn't have the equipment to deal with her increasingly outrageous machinations.

Without any slur on the author, the outcome is fairly predictable, but this good first novel has suspense for all that. As for style, the gentle slang gives it colour but, next time, the author needs to dare more, to expand from the merely literal.

Of course, in the way of English journalists, I must add that I'm not being anti-intellectual about education. Knowledge and learning are always good. It's just that you shouldn't wrap them in tissue paper. Without giving it all away, the moral is: get wise.

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Unchanging archaeology of terror

Lesley Chamberlain

THE FACULTY OF USELESS KNOWLEDGE

By Yuri Dombrovsky

Harvill, £15.99



Dombrovsky: generous

MOST modern Russian novelists have been Socialist Realists, and hence Soviet writers, even when expressing an anti-Soviet message.

Solzhenitsyn exemplifies the rule from which Yuri Dombrovsky (1909-1978), together with Pasternak and Bulgakov, is a rare exception. Dombrovsky is one of the clutch of repressed writers whose work has only recently become widely known in Russia. Exile for many years to the Kazakh capital Alma-Ata, almost on the Chinese border, long experience teaching foreign literature and a deep interest in archaeology, as well as painful years in prison camps, informed Dombrovsky's broad humanity.

The writing, which takes up all these themes, is leisurely, colloquial, generous and amusing. Here translated by Alan Myers, it is undramatic

and, unlike Solzhenitsyn, almost shy to confront violence and suffering head-on. Its strength is to give us, as it were, the soap-opera background to the Stalinist evil.

The *Faculty of Useless Knowledge*'s predecessor from 1966, *The Keeper of Antiquities*, was justly acclaimed a masterpiece when it first appeared in English a few years ago. It skilfully combines social comedy with glimpses of the Stalinist horror. *The Faculty of Useless Knowledge* carries on the story when the

Keeper, Dombrovsky's alter ego Georgy Zybin, is himself arrested in a fake scandal centred on the Alma-Ata archaeological museum.

Dombrovsky's fifth and last work, it was finished in 1975 and is the lesser novel, though its moral scope is vast. It is a necessary companion to *The Keeper*, showing us who could

resist the collective insanity of believing enemies of the people round every corner and who could not.

Claude Lanzmann's 1985 film *Shoah* took more than nine hours to convey the ordinary circumstances from which the Holocaust arose; Dombrovsky's 200,000 words do a similar job for the Terror, and command one equally to attend even as the narrative digresses into yet another auxiliary tale.

The familiar details of ordinary lives stand out: what the fashionable are wearing and how the girls are filing their nails while their neighbours are being tortured. The Terror coincided with the golden years of Hollywood. The Alma-Ata purge comes about because the envious brother of a Moscow prosecutor decides to stage a rival set of show trials. In Alma-Ata they talk of

Gloria Swanson though not of him; nor of "them", who are daily edited out of the picture.

Zybin grins, cavit, hits back. In a running demonstration of what is that faculty of useless knowledge by which we should most certainly live. Zybin loves animals, nature, people, beautiful objects, books and a history which he strives to feel in his own bones. The metaphor of archaeology is perfect for non-Sovietism. After digging for Roman remains in the East, the Keeper recuperates by gazing out over the Hellenistic Black Sea. Marxist-Leninism is a mere ripple in time. Life goes on.

It certainly does. I heard someone well-informed say recently that the Soviet regime was not as bad as all that. Revisionism will try its luck with the Terror. Just as it has with the Holocaust: another reason to keep reading.



Happier times: Boris Yeltsin, Mikhail Gorbachev and Nikolai Ryzhkov at the celebration, in 1990, of the 73rd anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution

The machinery of creative thought

Archibald Brown, whose portrait of Mikhail Gorbachev goes well beyond ordinary political biography, is shrewd in one respect. He realises that the popular perception of Gorbachev, both in Russia and in the West, as a spent force of which many have only a dim recollection, has nothing to do with the actual career prospects of the man who, using pseudo-democratic instruments of power developed by the KGB, has already given us Soviet totalitarianism with a capitalist face.

The apologist's strong is impeccable. Met with derision when it was first announced, Gorbachev's entry into the presidential race has now been backed, despite the lack of an established party organisation, by 1.7 million expertly collected signatures. Whether he wins or not is beside the point, and Professor Brown is all too well aware of this. "There were quizzical looks in my audience at Yale University," he recalls, when on October 22, 1990, he announced that an event of extraordinary potential significance took place in Moscow yesterday — the promotion to full membership of the Politburo of Mikhail Sergeevich Gorbachev.

He held this opinion, he states, "long before it became fashionable," and continued to hold it "after it had ceased to be fashionable, at any rate in Russia". It is an opinion this reviewer shares: like George Bush's mastery of the smoke-filled room, Gorbachev's influence is not based on electoral approval, past or future. Quite the reverse. The coming elections are a test of whether real power can translate into votes.

One question about the post-Soviet politician dodged in this book is to do with his past. Yet the answer is simple: the KGB was the *Mayflower* which brought Gorbachev out of provincial obscurity and onto the world stage. Another question is more complex and is to do with Gorbachev's methodology of exploiting the "Soviet collapse", which he helped engineer, to become the future master of Europe, stepping toward dictatorship through the 1920s-type disarray of civil war, profligate capitalism and parliamentary impotence. He would not be the first tyrant supported by a shadowy clique — think of Stalin's *apparatus* — to deploy such a stratagem.

Andrei Navrozov

THE GORBACHEV FACTOR
By Archie Brown
OUP, £18.99

Georgi Arbatov, appointed by the KGB in 1967 to head the Institute of the United States and Canada, where, in Professor Brown's happy phrase, "he took a genuinely pro-detente line", is cited here about a conversation he had with Yuri Andropov in 1977. Gorbachev, said the KGB chairman, is one of "the completely new people with whom it is really possible to link our hopes for the future". These words, almost identical to Margaret Thatcher's a decade later, are where Gorbachev's ascent began.

With the death on July 17, 1978 of Fedor Kulakov, which Professor Brown, in another of his happy locutions, describes as "relatively sudden" (adding, in a misleading footnote, that the "somewhat tautological" *Pravda* report at the time "had given rise to the speculation among Muscovites that his death was by suicide"), Gorbachev, a mere regional party secretary, moved to Moscow, taking the Brezhnevite's job in the Politburo.

On October 21, 1980, the day before Professor Brown's lecture at Yale, Pyotr Masherev, party secretary for the Belorussian Republic and candidate member of the Politburo since 1966, was to be promoted to full membership. But as a few days earlier Masherev had "tragically perished", according to *Pravda*, "in a car accident", it was Gorbachev who got the promotion instead of the Brezhnevite. Masherev's name is not in Professor Brown's book.

But Andropov's patronage meant more than "wet jobs" well done. In addition to Arbatov's famous think-tank, during his 15-year tenure as KGB chairman Andropov sponsored a vast network of "closed institutes" and "special organisations", many affiliated with the Academy of Sciences, to harness what Arbatov here calls "creative thought" and to lay the foundations of the "less recognisably totalitarian and economically diversified regime he envisioned". Of another such "institute", Professor Brown says that it was

"a refuge for a number of independent thinkers, who were to become very prominent proponents of transformative change in the Gorbachev era".

On December 24, 1983, from his sickbed, Andropov dictated to his aide Arkady Volysky (who today heads one of the most powerful "special organisations", the Business and Industry Union of Russia) his bequest of the Politburo leadership to Gorbachev.

Two years later, after the KGB-organised purge of the old guard had been completed and Gorbachev's "transformative change" was unveiled, it was the new chairman of the KGB, Viktor Chebrikov, who first used the words "glasnost" and "perestroika" in addressing the rank and file.

That this "new party line" was directed against the Communist Party and brought about its effective dissolution is a small paradox by the standards of Soviet history. Yet Europe's future may depend on the West's ability to recognise that the new Andropov elite rules the old Soviet Union, and that Gorbachev is their man.

A. S. Byatt on the unique voice of Doris Lessing

Passionate tale of the unexpected

DORIS LESSING'S characters are always in the grip of something — ideology, the zeitgeist, group dynamics, biochemistry. In *Love, Again* (a wonderful title) they are gripped by the most primeval and maddening force, erotic love, appearing unexpectedly, again. Again, and unwelcome in the case of Sarah Durham, who is 60 and had expected to live the rest of her life as a cool observer.

Sarah is a theatrical producer, part of a comfortable group in a fringe theatre, who put on a play based on the life and works of a 19th-century Frenchwoman, Julie Vairon. Julie was both independent — a beautiful girl from Martinique, gifted as a painter and musician, author of copious and moving diaries — and a victim, abandoned by two lovers, possibly the murderer of her child, who killed herself when marriage offered her stability and respectability.

She is an archetype of 19th-century heroism, and more widely a spirit of romantic love, her name recalling both Rousseau's Julie and Shakespeare's Juliet. Her diaries are passionate and analytical, her music is romantic but also austere, drawing on the ancient formal romance of troubadour lyrics. She is, intentionally I believe, the most real person in the novel. One character, Stephen, co-author of the play, is in love with her: all are affected by her.

The study of the putting on of the play is, like much of Lessing's best work, the study of the interaction of a group, and the kind of passions that flourish in closed worlds. It is seen through Sarah's eyes, as she falls in love, astounded, battered and always analytical, with not one but two men.

First is the beautiful and compulsively seductive Bill, young and androgynous and brash. Then there is the more shadowy Henry, the director, a responsible married man, who reciprocates her violent passionate feelings. Other actors and actresses are also involved in brief wildness and fierce grief. Another young actor develops a passion for Sarah to which in her besotted state she pays scant attention: when one is in love the beloved sheds rays of light everywhere; the unreciprocated lover is shadowy. It is as though some magic mushroom had shed spores on the assembled company.

The interesting thing about such violent sexual passion is its abstraction, which Lessing's heroines are intelligent enough to observe even while they are tormented in body and mind. Once aroused, the obsession is transferable. It is love that takes a grip on Sarah, not crude Bill or delicate Henry.

This novel is not a midsummer night's dream, nor yet a comedy of errors. It is harshly written, its characters drawn in broad brushstrokes, just recognisable rather than being delicate or sympathetic individuals — the central actor is love itself. Painful things are held up to be looked at — the

different fates of ageing men besotted with young female flesh, who may be rejuvenated and comforted, and the dryness and pain of older women, who are less lucky.

Sarah's friendship with Stephen risks ruin from the greater force of sexual passion in both of them. Stephen mistakenly supposes himself the object of Sarah's awakened erotic attention; Sarah watches helplessly as he seeks for the dead woman in her living imitators, the actresses.

On the periphery of this madness is Sarah's brother, a complacent doctor, his exhausted wife, his two silly healthy daughters and his aimless and inadequate daughter, who is slipping into drugs and prostitution. If the play has a wild destructive life, the family has a dead destructive child. But Sarah comes to see that her brother was her first and most absolute love, from which all others take their form.

Doris Lessing's recent autobiography also balanced a wise reflective voice with a sense that she herself, and all of us, are driven by forces we have little or no control over. These forces, both in this novel and in the autobiography, are symbolised by music, rhythms that set people tapping and humming and moving together, rather than thinking coolly.

Doris Lessing's own unique voice, half intuitive prophet, half amused analyst of human folly, comes out variously and splendidly in *Parting the Question* (Faber, £12.99), published in 1994. Here she discusses with writers as varied as Joyce Carol Oates, Claire Tomalin, Christopher Bigsby and Brian Aldiss, as well as French and German interviewers, her ideas on communism and feminism, Africa and England, the profession of writing, and the difference between writers and academics, prophets, or philosophers.

SHE HAS, as some of the interviewers point out, an uncanny knack of writing premonitory novels about what the world will shortly come to be obsessed with — free women, the old, the terrorist. She has kept her eye on women's lives, from young girls drowns with sex to old women invisible to everyone except those who fear becoming old women themselves. She has hoaxed the literary establishment with anonymous novels and been surprised when that establishment reacted with embarrassed irritation.

Her mixture of passionate involvement and the capacity to stand back and take a long look at what was going on, or will go on, is unlike that of any novelist writing now, except perhaps Saul Bellow, and the late Anthony Burgess. *Love, Again* grips, maddens, depresses and excites the reader from the first page to the last. And the interviews give guarded glimpses into the making of the novels and their world.



Lessing: premonitory

Just when was the word?

Henry Chadwick

THE JESUS PAPYRUS

By Carsten Peter Thiede and Matthew D'Ancona
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.99

There are steps in the argument about the dating of the Magdalen papyrus that arouse qualms. Thiede attaches great weight to the identification by a learned Spaniard of a scrap of Greek papyrus found in Qumran, Cave 7, commonly abbreviated 7Q5, found in 1955. The few surviving letters are compatible with being Mark 6: 52-53 provided one can explain the absence of three words attested in other lines of transmission but impossible to fit into the available space.

If the identification is correct, however, it would point to

the conclusion that Mark's Gospel antedates the destruction of the Qumran buildings in AD 68, provided this site was not reoccupied after 68, eg. at the time of the Jewish revolt of Bar Cochba under Hadrian 67 years later.

That Mark's Gospel is not very late is a reasonable deduction from his passing reference (15:21) to Simon of Cyrene's sons, Alexander and Rufus, of whom Mark's community was evidently expected to know something. The reference to the "abomination of desolation" (13:14) points at least to a date after the emperor Caligula's proposal to compel the Jews to honour him by admitting to the Temple a vast statue of himself as a new manifestation of Zeus.

The fall of Jerusalem in AD 70 is probably not important in the dating problem. But if Peter and Paul died as

martyrs during Nero's persecution at Rome in 64, someone in the community was likely to think it was time to write down the memories of what the Apostles used to say with the intention of underlining the religious significance of the story, above all of the Passion narrative.

Thiede and D'Ancona are likely to be near the truth in wanting to date the first three Gospels about the middle decades of the 1st century. The arguments from the papyrus are regrettably too precarious to allow for the ringing certainty with which undated scraps of papyrus are assigned to particular years or decades. Nevertheless, even if Magdalen's fragments are not sacred relics contemporary with the Gospel-makers, they are assuredly very ancient and to be revered.

MAGDALEN was given its treasure by Charles Huleatt, an evangelical missionary who was chaplain to British winter visitors at Luxor in the 1890s, died in the Messina earthquake of 1908, and is commemorated on a plaque at the Luxor hotel.



Qumran papyrus scroll fragment 7Q5: (Mark 6: 52-3)

Demanding a future for love

Rachel Cusk

DANGEROUS LOVE

By Ben Okri
Phoenix House, £15.99

embedded two jewels: Omovo, a talented young painter, and Ifeyiwa, a beautiful girl from a distant village, imported against her will to marry a bullying slob named Takpo.

In such surroundings, it is inevitable not only that they will fall in love, but will believe that they are destined to do so, a course as unavoidable and apparently fruitless

as their neighbours' misery. The danger of the title lies not so much in the possibility of the lovers' discovery, as in the optimism, the glimpse of something better, their feelings for each other engender.

Okri's portrait of the benighted ghettos ranges in tone from the wryly comic to a luridness of Gothic proportions, the former accounting for the resilient sociability of the human spirit, the latter expressing a fastidious horror at the atrocities of the human condition. Okri has a good eye for this local traffic, its stories, its slang, its inevitable comedians, bullies and grotesques.

What is condemned is its lethargy, its abject acceptance of the cosmic insult of its circumstances.

The stage is set early on for a powerful disquisition of a country where the future has been cancelled and the forces of life driven to mutiny. That none of it quite coheres is the fault more of Okri's writing than his vision. His style is possessed of a false economy: it glances off its subject, never really finding a clean hit, so that more often than not he mauls the truth he is trying to apprehend by showering it with volleys of description.

That he succeeds neverthe-

less in smuggling images from his mind to the reader's suggests curiously that he is more sensitive to pictures than language. His landscape is memorable and his characters well-drawn; their motives and movements, their inner lives, less so.

Hemmed in by their author's outrage, they have little room to manoeuvre, for the emotional core of the novel has been hijacked by a more political sensibility. Some of Okri's more promising scenarios — Omovo's father's guilty second marriage, Takpo's ruminations on the ingratitude and inconstancy of

women — are left behind by a momentum which seeks a coup de théâtre where an unidirectional conclusion would do.

Omovo is the main casualty of this tendency: his final "moment of illumination" is the frenzied, incoherent outburst of a man trapped in the wrong medium, at the end of which one is not really much the wiser, and Omovo himself can merely conclude that "everything has significance".

Dangerous Love has a good story, and a good story can speak for itself. Okri shouts, as if suspecting a certain deafness, whether his own or ours is unclear. Not everything, it might be added, has significance: if one is looking for human tragedy, that, perhaps, is where to find it.

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Why it pays to check in early

Hundreds of transatlantic airline passengers found themselves temporarily stranded at Heathrow last week as the number of "bumped" passengers reached record levels.

Airlines blamed a combination of early Easter holiday-makers and American tourists who had bought special offer tickets, the return portion of which had to be used before the end of March.

I suspect that many more travellers will be at risk from this most annoying of practices during this busy Easter weekend.

Why do airlines do it? The answer is simple and logical to the airline industry, but infuriating to those affected by it. Business travellers and their travel agents are most to

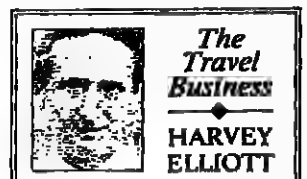
the computer gets it wrong. The European Union decided that this had happened so often that it issued a directive that if a passenger checks in on time — and that means at the desk and not at the back of the queue — and has a confirmed ticket, he or she must be carried or be entitled to compensation of about £270 for a journey of more than 3,500 miles, or half that amount for fewer miles.

Some airlines hold "auctions" at the gate offering ever-increasing amounts of cash, travel vouchers or other benefits to passengers not to take a particular flight. This means that most of those who are "bumped" are volunteers. But for those who really need to catch a particular flight, how can the risk be minimised? Pay in advance, get the ticket in your hand, reconfirm if you are abroad and — above all — check in early.

Most airlines operate a priority scheme which ensures that any disabled passenger, those who have registered their special needs or special pleadings, members of frequent-flyer programmes, executive club members and anyone who knows how best to massage the system are given a seat. These are followed by those who have paid the full economy fare and then those who arrive early.

Should all this be necessary? Perhaps the time has come for IATA to refuse to grant a licence to those travel agents who persistently overbook. And perhaps business passengers who do not arrive for a flight could be charged an "inconvenience" fee.

It would be a brave airline which launched such a scheme — it could alienate its most lucrative class of traveller, the one prepared to pay through the nose for the right to be a nuisance if he or she wants to be. If the whole process was ended it would also take away from economy class passengers that thrilling, but all too rare, chance of being upgraded into the seat which had been booked by the truant business class passenger.



The Travel Business
HARVEY ELLIOTT

blame. Often with casual disregard for the convenience of fellow passengers, they make bookings on up to five flights, knowing they can use only one. Because they are paying a full business class fare they believe that they are entitled to whatever flight they want. Others paying less, apparently, do not count.

Over-keen travel agents block-book seats on flights which they expect to sell, and then forget to tell the airline that the booking has not materialised.

A full-price ticket has no restrictions and can be collected and paid for on departure, or a refund can be had if it is not issued. On average between 10 and 15 per cent of all tickets booked — mainly business class — are not used.

Airlines have, therefore, devised sophisticated programmes to predict what flights on which routes might have the most "no shows", then deliberately overbook them to avoid flying with empty seats.

The problem comes when

SEVERAL British theme parks will this Easter be admitting children on the basis of height rather than age in an attempt to end confusion over what age a child needs to be to qualify for cheaper entry prices, David Churchill writes.

Thorpe Park in Surrey, Camelot Theme Park in Chorley, Lancashire, and Drayton Manor Park near Tamworth, West Midlands, are among several theme parks which now charge according to how tall children are. "It is a fairer method because there are some rides on which children cannot go because of their size, so they should get in for less," said a spokeswoman for Thorpe Park.

Theme parks are to charge by the inch

Children visiting Thorpe Park, a favourite with the Princess of Wales and her children, are allowed in free if they are less than 0.9 metres high. For those between 0.9 metres and 1.4 metres, the price is £11.25 and those taller than this are charged £13.25. Children are measured on admission by the character Harley the Cat to determine how much they pay.

At Camelot, those under 1 metre in height are admitted

free, while for all those over a metre the price is £12.99. Drayton Manor Park charges a small entry fee then admission to the rides of £6 for those under 1.2 metres, and £9 over this.

Not all theme park operators, however, believe that charging by height is fair. "We think it is rather discriminatory," says Chessington World of Adventures in Surrey, which charges children aged between four and 14

£13 for entry, with adult admission £16.50. But Chessington does operate some height restrictions on its biggest thrill rides for safety reasons. Riders on Rameses Revenge, for example, have to be at least 4ft 10in, but not taller than 6ft 10in. "Otherwise, the safety harness would not fit," says a spokeswoman.

What constitutes a child also varies from park to park. The new Legoland Park, at Windsor charges child prices

(£12) from three to 15, while at Alton Towers, the child price of £13 covers ages four to 13 inclusive.

At Oakwood Park at Nantwich, Cheshire, which this summer is due to open Europe's biggest wooden roller-coaster at a cost of £1.8 million, child prices (£7.95) apply to those aged between three and nine.

Thorpe Park, which last week was voted Best United Kingdom Theme Park in the 1996 Parent Friendly Awards, organised by the Tommy's Campaign in London, has also launched a Plan Ahead ticket which it claims makes it cheaper than its rivals. For two adults and two children, the cost is £40, a saving of £9 on normal rates.

Boom in holiday villages

By Tony Dawe

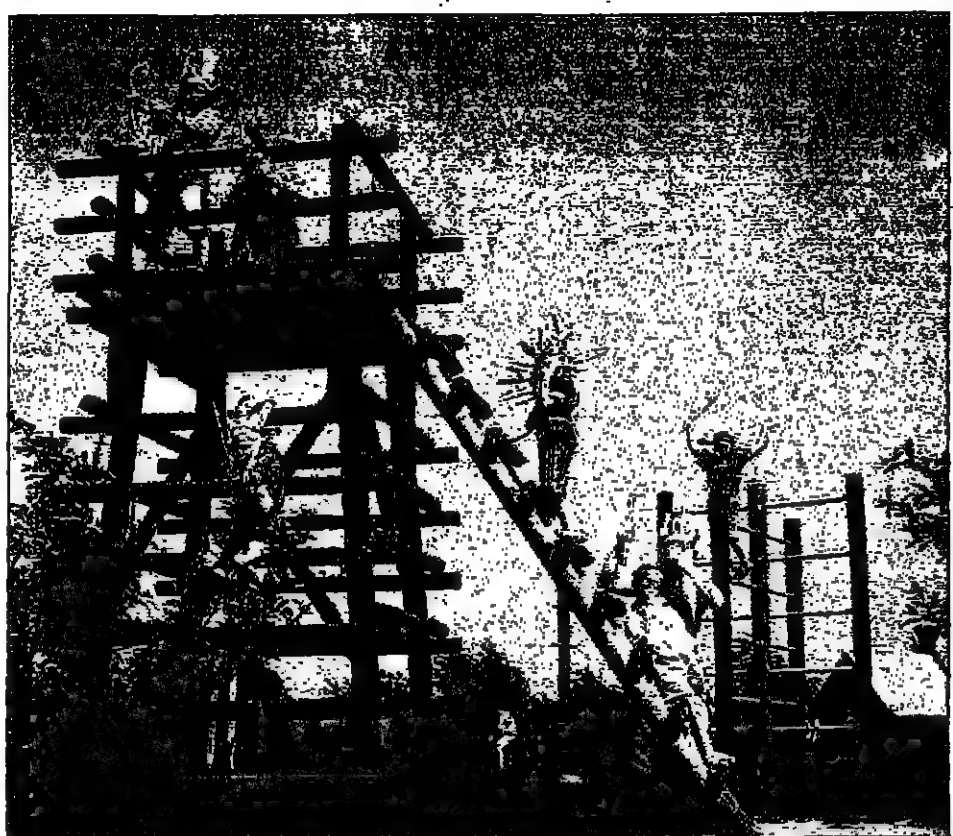
WITH Center Parcs reporting that its three holiday villages in England are fully booked for Easter, rival companies are stepping up their efforts to tap the booming all-inclusive, all-action market.

Gran Dorado Parks & Hotels is mounting a determined campaign to encourage British tourists to take the short ferry trip across the North Sea to visit its six parks in Holland and Germany and is planning three more centres which, it believes, will appeal strongly to the UK market.

Oasis Villages, part of the Rank Organisation, has started building work on its first project in the Lake District, and a second in Kent is in the planning stage.

The companies' choice of sites emphasises a growing belief in the tourist industry that visitors want to stay in holiday villages which boast outside attractions as well as all the leisure, sporting and restaurant facilities inside.

Mieke van Nuenen, of Center Parcs, says that though people taking weekend breaks seldom want to leave the villages, those staying for longer are keen to take day trips. The company's newest village in Britain is at Longleat, close to the Marquess of Bath's stately home, and Bath and Bristol. The company attracted 3.5 million



Gran Dorado, with six holiday villages in Germany and Holland, is targeting British tourists

visitors to its 14 parks in Europe last year, more than any in many leading international hotel chains.

"Holiday villages are enjoying a boom but they will have to change to keep attracting

visitors," says Jan van der Dussen, president of Gran Dorado. "Holidaymakers enjoy the setting and the facilities but they want to find something interesting outside."

He believes that the Gran

Dorado village at Zandvoort will be particularly attractive to British visitors, as it is set within a popular seaside resort with good beaches and is within easy reach of Amsterdam. "Even with the ferry

crossing, a holiday at Zandvoort will cost a family far less than staying in a hotel with similar facilities," Mr van der Dussen adds.

The company earned four times more from British visitors last year than in 1994 and although the £800,000 revenue was a tiny fraction of the company's total earnings of £140 million, Mr van der Dussen believes it was a significant development.

The company has earmarked two sites close to Berlin for new villages which are expected to attract visitors from across Europe. Mr van der Dussen says: "It is hard to think of anywhere else in the world where holidaymakers could stay in a rural setting with so many facilities yet be so close to a famous city."

Julie Gould, a spokeswoman for Oasis Villages, says: "All holiday villages tend to be destinations in their own right but the choice of a site close to Penrith in a well-established tourist area for our first development will be an added advantage."

The company is seeking planning permission for a second village between Canterbury and Dover in Kent, where its proximity to the Channel might lead to a reversal of the current trend of visitors from the Continent being lured to an English park instead of British tourists being urged to go overseas.

FERRY BARGAINS

Price cuts on duty-free

STENA Line has cut duty-free prices in a day-trip promotion valid throughout April. Litres of gin, whisky and vodka cost £7.99, with other offers on beer and cigarettes. Bookings must be made by April 20 for travel from Dover, Newhaven or Southampton, with prices £15 a car and £1 a passenger, or £5 for foot passengers. Details: 0950 767676.

DRIVELINE Europe is offering advanced discounts on Le Shuttle crossings for late-night drivers. A five-day return costs £69, a 28-day return £79 for travel between 9pm and 5am, returning at any time. The offer is valid until October 30. Details: 01707 660011.

HOVERSPED has April offers for a car and five passengers. A three-day return Folkestone-Boulogne costs £49 (four days £59, five days £69). On Dover-Calais a three-day return is quoted at £59 (four days £69, five days £79). Details: 01304 240241.

SWANSEA Cork Ferries has booked two jazz bands to play on October 24 crossings over the Irish Sea to celebrate the Guinness Cork Jazz Festival from October 25 to 28. The company is offering two nights B&B in Cork and ferry from £130 a person. Details: 01792 456116.

LE SHUTTLE has packaged short breaks from £55 a person in the Champagne region or Le Touquet to include a crossing through the tunnel and one night B&B, based on two people sharing a room. Details: 0990 333535.

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Virgin
waits for
Eurostar

Ferry aid
marks row

Madrid
Departing

Virgin waits for Eurostar

By Jonathan Prynn

THE handover of the Eurostar high-speed train service to a private consortium including the Virgin Group has been delayed for a month by a Brussels wrangle over the subsidy promised by the Government to the company.

London & Continental Railways (LCR) was due to take over the running of the capital-to-capital trains from the Government on April 1 after its victory in the competition for the £3 billion Channel Tunnel rail link contract. But the formal transfer of ownership of European Passenger Services (EPS), the state-owned company that operates Eurostar, is now unlikely to take place before the end of the month and could be postponed until May.

The delay, which has caused intense frustration for LCR officials, has been caused by unforeseen problems in obtaining Brussels approval for a government write-off of EPS's debts.

Britain's European partners are closely scrutinising the terms of the write-off after British complaints about the state aid paid by the Spanish

Government to Iberia and by the French Government to Brittany Ferries.

An LCR official said: "Other countries want to know exactly what is happening before they rubber-stamp the deal. An issue that was thought to be non-controversial is now having to be looked at carefully. It will take only two or three weeks but it has come at an embarrassing time — just after the Iberia and Brittany Ferries problems.

"LCR is all ready to go: it's just a matter of the Department of Transport getting its act together. It is frustrating for us because we want to start sorting out the ticketing and reservations."

LCR began paying a share of EPS's operating losses, which are thought to be running at £100 million a year, from April 1 in return for being allowed some limited operational involvement before the formal handover.

Three senior former Virgin Atlantic executives have already been seconded to EPS's head office to try to start work on the ticket sales, marketing and finances of Eurostar.

Ferry aid sparks row

FRENCH government plans to give Brittany Ferries £40 million in subsidies to offset the high costs of European social chapter legislation have been attacked by the Channel Tunnel operator Le Shuttle, Harvey Elliott writes.

"We have protested to the French Transport Ministry and we are seeking to take it up with the European Commission," said a spokesman for Le Shuttle in London. "We want them to make a decision on whether or not this subsidy is legal and, if necessary, we will challenge it in the courts."

Rival ferry companies are still waiting for the final details of the subsidy to be made clear before deciding what to do, but it is likely that both P&O and Stena Sealink will protest.

Britannia Ferries is owned by a consortium of local authorities in the northwest of France. It has been complaining for years that the French insistence on complying with European labour legislation has landed the company with costs which are far higher than its British-owned rivals.

Devon zoo goes wild

By Harvey Elliott

PAIGNTON ZOO in Devon is to spend £6 million on transforming itself into an environmental theme park which could become a blueprint for zoos in the 21st century.

The scheme, which was unveiled yesterday, includes the creation of five specific "habitats" in which animals, insects and plants can live in conditions as close as possible to those of the wild.

The European Regional Development Fund is providing £2.9 million in grants to the zoo and the entire project should be completed in time for the summer.

Paignton Zoo was first opened in 1923 by its founder, Herbert Whitley, who wanted to teach local children about wild animals. In 1955 the Whitley Wildlife Conservation Trust was formed as a scientific and educational charity to operate both the zoo and the Slopston Ley National Nature Reserve in south Devon.

More than 275,000 people visited the zoo last year and this is expected to increase to 350,000 as the new developments progress. Among the visitors were 29,000 students who took part in both residential and day courses.

The five new habitats will be: a tropical rainforest within a heated glass-covered building and elevated walkways in the upper tree canopy; a savannah area where breeding groups of endangered species will mingle with elephant and giraffe; a forest with a walk-through aviary, woodland enclosures for endangered Asiatic lions and Sumatran tigers and an island home for great apes; a wetland area with feature plant and animal life of marshlands and riverbanks; and there will also be 50 acres of Devon woodland with night viewing of resident wild badgers and artificial moonlight.

Children will be encouraged with special activity areas with features such as underwater periscopes and views inside burrows.



This Sumatran tiger at Paignton Zoo is to get a new habitat

Return to the pier

By Roger Bray

THE long decline of that curious Victorian phenomenon, the pleasure pier, has mirrored the fall from grace of the traditional British seaside holiday.

Now there is a new drive to focus interest on an often neglected aspect of coastal heritage.

This, the Year of the Pier, inevitably leans heavily on nostalgia — images of ladies promenading in long skirts, parasols and boaters protecting fair English skins against the scourge of sunburn — but the real aim of the promotion is to ensure their survival through a nationwide programme of special events.

There will be acrobatic displays over at least 11 of the 28 participating piers including Clacton, where Morecambe and Wise were once regular summer performers.

At Great Yarmouth, whose pavilion was once burnt down, allegedly by suffragettes, and where, ironically, those of unrestrained womanhood the Chippendales will play this summer, there will be fireworks.

Brighton's Palace Pier, where Edward VII promenaded and Gustav Holst played the trombone, was left to run down before it was rescued for posterity, and will stage an exhibition of evocative historic photographs.

Eastbourne Pier, reckoned to be one of the finest examples of Victorian engineering skill and currently undergoing a £1.5 million improvement scheme, will see raft racing and a Mad Hatter's tea party.

Clarence Pier at Southsea, where Lord Nelson clambered into a longboat en route for Trafalgar, will open two new rides: the terrifying Monster Express and the Ultimate Wave ride.

At Llandudno, former members of the old pier orchestra, once conducted by an aspiring Malcom Sargent, will entertain holidaymakers again.

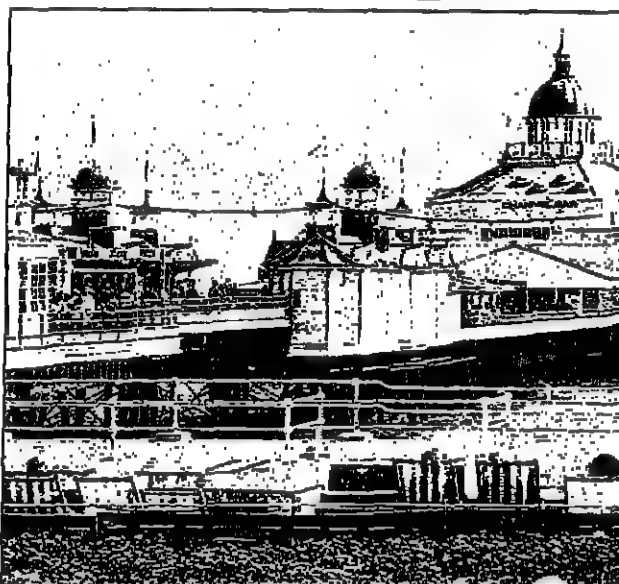
The first pier was built at Weymouth, a resort popularised by George III, the first monarch to use a bathing machine. It opened in 1812, the year of Napoleon's retreat from Moscow.

A year later came Ryde on the Isle of Wight, and by the mid-19th century, pier-building had become a mania to match the earlier digging of canals, with one or two new ones opening every year.

They were symbols of civic pride and the new economic success of Britain's seaside towns, and their popularity was enhanced by the spread of railways and the passing of the 1871 Bank Holiday Act.

They have suffered many indignities since. Follies were blown down twice during the Second World War for fear the enemy might land on it. Plymouth's was heavily bombed. Minehead's was wiped out altogether, to give defending gunners a clear line of sight.

Southend, the longest of all, was taken over by the Navy, ravaged by fire and cut in two by a coaster. But it stimulated Sir John Benjamin to write a line which the organisers of the promotion hope will provide inspiration for others: "The Pier is Southend. Southend is the Pier."



Eastbourne Pier, undergoing a £1.5m refurbishment

World's biggest party

By David Churchill

THE world's biggest birthday party will be held today when Inter-Continental Hotels celebrates its 179th anniversary by giving every guest at its 179 hotels worldwide a small birthday cake.

Cakes will vary in their ingredients from hotel to hotel, such as a praline cake in New Orleans and a traditional date cake at the hotels in Saudi Arabia. The Churchill Inter-Continental in London is creating the Winston Churchill birthday cake; the Willard Inter-Continental in Washington Abraham Lincoln's favourite election cake.

Robert Collier, Inter-Continental's joint managing director, says that 32,000 cakes will be served around the world. The anniversary of the company's formation will not be backward-looking. "We are," he says, "very conscious of our expansion plans, which means that we expect to beat easily our target of 200 hotels by the year 2000."

Many of these hotels will be built in emerging overseas cities in the Far East and Latin America. Inter-Continental is opening a hotel in Taiwan later this year, followed by others in Cambodia and China.

Mr Collier admits that many of these are "difficult" destinations. "But," he says, "as an international chain serving business travellers we have to be where the markets are developing the fastest."

BARGAINS OF THE WEEK

HOLIDAYS

THE newly-launched Qantas Holidays is offering special deals to the Far East to telephone callers, with five nights in Bangkok costing £439 per person including scheduled flights, and five nights in Hong Kong costing £569. Details: 0990 673464.

SKI Savoie is offering a special price of £199 per person for the last week of the season in a catered chalet at Courchevel with departures from Gatwick on April 14. Details: 0181-715 1122.

SPEND £21 a night in Kenya is the offer from Tropical Places, with three weeks' half-board at an Indian Ocean hotel costing £449 per person, with Gatwick departures on April 21 and 28. Details: 01342 825123.

TURKEY for a week for £139 per person is among the late offers from Lunn Poly, with flights from Manchester on April 28. Details: 01203 225888.

SRI LANKA for a week for £455 per person is available from Kuoni from April 10 to June 22. Details: 01306 740500.

HOTELS

AN independent guide to bed and breakfast accommodation in France, covering more than 600 properties inspected by the French Bed and Breakfast Association, has just been published. £5.50, including postage. Details: 01491 578803.

GARDEN and needlecraft weekends are the latest packages from Hilton National. First on offer is from April 26-28 at its Leeds hotel, taking in Harrogate Flower Show and Ripley Castle. Cost for two nights is £139. Details: 01923 434000 and ask for special events.

THE Portobello Townhouse Hotel, west London, is celebrating its 25th anniversary next week with a special offer of 25 per cent off normal room rates until the end of the month. Details: 0171-727 2777.

THE Good Bed and Breakfast Guide was published yesterday by the Consumers' Association, offering more than 1,100 recommendations for as little as £15 per person per night. Which? Books. £14.99.

FLIGHTS

AIR FRANCE and subsidiary Air Inter Europe have introduced a "business saver" loyalty card. Priced from £249, it provides a 30 per cent discount on business flights between London and Paris, Lyons, Bordeaux, Nice, Strasbourg and Toulouse. Details: 0181-742 6600.

AT THE same time both these airlines have introduced lower, yet flexible, fares for travellers aged over 60. London-Paris costs from £114 with London-Bordeaux available from £176. Details: 0181-742 6600.

FLEMISH airline VLM has launched a route between London City and Mönchengladbach. Return fares start at £85. Details: 0171-476 6677.

SWISS Carrier Edelweiss Air has started a five-times weekly Luton-Zurich service. Fares are £80 one way and between £109 and £129 return. Details: 01293 553717.

READERS wishing to stop over in the Gulf on their next business trip to the Far East or Australia can save up to 50 per cent when flying Gulf Air. Travelbag is charging £1.043 for business class flights to Sydney or Melbourne and Hong Kong or Singapore available for £1,445. Details: 01420 88724.

TRAVELMOOD has a £482 fare to Hong Kong flying with Cathay Pacific between mid-April and mid-June. Details: 0171-258 0280.

Beware the passport rush

By Harvey Elliott

ATTEMPTS to warn holidaymakers that they must now obtain a full ten-year passport before travelling abroad seem to have fallen on deaf ears.

United Kingdom Passport Agency officials say that thousands of people who have become used to buying an instant British Visitors Passport just before they go abroad may now be unable to travel if they do not have the full passport.

The BVP was formally abolished in January and even those going on a day trip to France must now buy a full ten-year passport.

But officials at the agency report that the expected rush since the BVP was dropped has not taken place.

A senior passport agency official says: "We have issued more than six million leaflets and have told everyone who bought a BVP during 1995 about its abolition. Despite the publicity, the public has been slow to react to this major change in travel documents. So far, we have not seen a significant demand from the 1.2 million people who bought BVPs in 1995."

Now the agency fears that there will be a surge in demand later this year, which could put at risk the agency's attempts to issue a passport within 15 working days.

Anyone applying now for a full passport, which costs £18, can expect to have it returned in about five working days. But the agency says that later in the year it could take up to five weeks.

Post Offices will now check applications for passports before sending them to the agency for processing at a charge of £2.75. In a new move, main Post Offices are to be allowed to sell airline tickets.

Richard Dykes, the managing director of Post Office Counters, says: "Post Offices have traditionally offered travel-related services such as passport applications and the E111 health insurance form."

"Customers can also now buy foreign currency, transfer cash internationally and take out travel insurance at 18,500 Post Offices. Offering flight tickets is a natural extension of these services."

The new service is on trial at the Trafalgar Square office in London for 18 months, during which time four or five other sites will be opened. If it proves a success, the scheme will be expanded throughout the country.

Disneyland Paris announces its latest attraction. The price.

Indiana Jones and the Temple of Peril, Big Thunder Mountain and, of course, Space Mountain — the greatest adventure in the universe. Disneyland Paris has always had plenty of attractions for the whole family.

Even the prices are an attraction in their own right; there are many special offers available this April, while during May and June, a family of four can enjoy three great days of fun and excitement for just £118 each.

This includes a return trip by Le Shuttle for one car, two nights at the three-star Sequoia Lodge, continental breakfast and, best of all, unlimited entry to the Park.

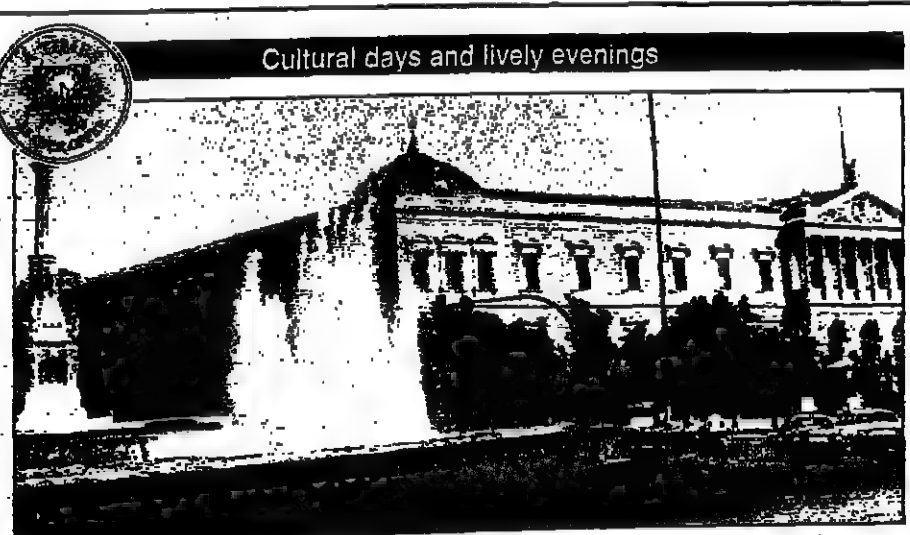
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*Based on two adults and two children (3-11 years old inclusive) sharing a room. Offer is applicable for two-night packages starting on any of the following dates: May 5-7, 12-14, 19-21, 27-29 or June 2-4, 9-11, 16-18. Theme Park Tickets can only be purchased independently from The Disney Store, Keith Prowse and participating agencies. At a cost of £25 per adult or £19 per child for Day Passes. Tel No. 700404.



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Set deep in the heart of Spain, this bustling, cosmopolitan capital offers a blend of history, culture and sophistication. Visit the splendour of the Royal Palace, the treasure of the famous Museo del Prado and the colonnaded Plaza Mayor in the old quarter. Stroll along the Gran Vía with its many elegant shops, or relax in a pavement cafe and enjoy the atmosphere of this vivacious city. For entertainment see a traditional flamenco show, or join the traditional tapas bars, meal in one of the traditional streets of old Madrid. Optional excursions include a panoramic city sightseeing tour and a full day trip to the Imperial Toledo, home of El Greco.

The holiday price includes:

- Return flights to Madrid from London Gatwick. Your flight leaves Gatwick on Wednesday morning and is due back at Gatwick early Monday morning.
- Four nights accommodation in the three star Hotel Centro Norte. £169 per person based on two people sharing a twin/double room.
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- Return coach transfers between Madrid Airport and the hotel.
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Daly seeks form in dry run for Masters

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT IN ATLANTA

IT IS April in Georgia and a golf tournament starts this morning. It cannot be the Masters already, can it? Indeed not, although the azaleas are in bloom, as is the cherry blossom and dogwood. It is the BellSouth Classic, which this year falls seven days before the start of the Masters and is thus elevated into an event of international significance.

Seven Europeans are competing at the Atlanta Country Club here, 20 miles northwest of the centre of the city where the Olympics will begin in 107 days. The invasion force is led by Colin Montgomerie, who drove here from Jacksonville, Florida, where he finished equal second in The Players' Championship on Sunday.



Daly: sympathy

and comprises Ian Woosnam, Severiano Ballesteros, Sandy Lyle, Costantino Rocca, Sam Torrance and Alexander Cejka.

Few of them have any experience of this hilly course, which has bent-grass greens and swooping, tree-lined fairways, and thus is more than slightly reminiscent of Augusta. Few are in any kind of form, either. Montgomerie was the only one of those who played who made the cut in Jacksonville.

One who does know this course is Stephen Keppler, an Englishman and former Walker Cup player, who is a club professional in Georgia. Last year, almost for a lark, Keppler entered a qualifying competition and, after getting through, then almost lived out a fairy-tale by sharing the lead with Jim Gallagher Jr after 54 holes. Keppler's 71, one under par, in the fourth round was a highly creditable score for a player who was not used to tournament pressure, even though Gallagher pulled ahead of him, and Mark

Calcevecchia came charging through the field to overtake them both and win.

It was here two years ago that John Daly won his first tournament after becoming a teetotaler. It was his last victory in the United States, and it came eight weeks after he returned from his suspension for leaving the course during a tournament in Hawaii. "It was more important for me than the US PGA because I won it sober," Daly, the Open champion, said. "That was when I knew I could do it — not drink. I mean, I had been sober for five months then."

There are days when Daly can be a beguiling figure, when his tendency to give up in tournaments in which he starts badly is forgotten, and when his hell-raising past appears to be behind him. There are at present an increasing number of days when Daly appears to be accepting the responsibilities that go with his status as the only player under 30 to hold two major championships. He is realising he has become a folk hero to blue-collar workers: the people's champion.

The other night he was wandering around the hotel waving cheerfully at friends. In an open-necked shirt and shorts, he cut an increasingly sympathetic figure as he bravely ignored the siren calls of the bar. He has started practising much harder, too. This was first noticeable in Singapore in January, when he stepped off the plane and went straight to the practice ground for three hours, and it has continued. This is in marked contrast to last year, when he sometimes did no more than hit a few drives and putts before a tournament.

"Last Sunday we had a 12.50 tee-time and John wanted me at the course by 9.20," Greg Rila, Daly's caddy, said. "Thursday we were there at 10 o'clock for a 1.20pm start. He has already practised more this year than all of last."

Daly needs to, however, because in the six events he has won less than £50,000, and even his traditional strength, his long hitting, seems to have deserted him. He ranks 150th in accuracy and 35th in distance this year. When he hooked a drive last Sunday, he threw the club to a child in his gallery and said: "Here, take this. You can hit it better than I can."



Jacklin, feeling the pressure on the US Senior Tour, is in a hurry to become a two-million dollar man

Jacklin seizing second chance

A former Open champion, topping up his pension fund, talks to Patricia Davies

Tony Jacklin is having fun but he is a man under pressure. At 51, he is fretting about dollars, constantly calculating, totting up every cent as he edges closer to his goal — a safe haven well inside the top 70 all-time money-winners in America.

Once there, the former British and US Open champion will be able to relax a little, knowing his place on the lucrative Senior PGA Tour, a golden nest egg for the silver-haired, is secure.

"I need to get to two million dollars sharpish," Jacklin, who has won twice since he joined the tour in July 1994 and is now 78th on the all-time list with \$1,026,864, said. "I've been moderately successful up to now but I'm still grinding. The thought of having to go to the qualifying school petrifies me."

Having played in Europe for most of his career, he earned only \$352,179 on the US PGA Tour. Last season he played 35 tournaments and finished 31st on the Senior money-list, earning \$387,214 but retaining his exempt status by just \$317 — only the top 31 earners each year are

guaranteed to be among the chosen few the following year.

The tour — golf's invitation not to retire — has grown from two tournaments worth \$250,000 in 1980 to 44 events worth \$37 million in 1996. Cadillac, one of the leading sponsors, reckoned over \$250 million worth of business was a direct result of their involvement. The tour is not the greatest thing since sliced bread — it is manna from heaven.

Jacklin, one of the crumb-chasers, sees his decision to stay in Europe in his prime as a mistake. He lost his zest for the game that had been his life and was glad to give it up. Now he is eager again. "Having a second opportunity is fantastic," he said, "but this time I was determined to do it for me. I'm playing for fun again, to see how good I can be — like I started out to do."

Jacklin looks after his game and Astrid, his wife, in Florida supervising the builders this week (the house

should be ready next month), takes care of everything else. He is loving the challenge, although he stresses the strains.

"I don't believe for a minute that people fully understand how difficult it is to stay out here on this tour. There are 78 spots every week and, if you're not in that 78, you're nowhere. The money's there, but you've got to play like hell to get any of it. I suspect people think the fat bellies, these old guys, are only playing exhibition golf, but not one person out here sees it as an exhibition tour."

Certainly not Jim Colbert, last season's No 1, nor Raymond Floyd, nor Dave Stockton, nor Bob Murphy, nor Isoo Aoki, the Jacklin of Japan. They all won more than \$1 million in 1995. And certainly not the irrepressible Gary Player, second in three of the last four events, fit as a flea at 60, extolling the virtues of the tour's new official health

drink, raving about his new driver that hits it 25-30 yards further and railing against the iniquities of ageism — "brainwashing", he calls it.

This week they are all at The Tradition at Desert Mountain in Arizona's Sonora desert, north of Phoenix, to be even more spoilt than they are most weeks. The event's avowed intention is to provide a week of camaraderie — with some fierce competition thrown in — for the legends of the game. The trophy, discovered in Scotland, looks remarkably like an old claret jug but, sadly, Brian Barnes, the Senior British Open champion, was not invited. The British event is considered a worthy one by Player but not by the powers-that-be in the land of the free.

The purse is a million dollars, the setting is majestic, with mouthwatering mountain views and towering saguaro cactus far older than Player will ever be, and Jack Nicklaus defends the title. Named golfer of the century as long ago as 1983, he could claim his hundredth victory on Easter Sunday, although he might prefer to wait a week — until August.

Take a tip from Leadbetter and you will be in good company

By Mel Webb

AS THOUGH proof of its constantly enhanced status in the world of amateur golf were needed, The Times MeesPierson Corporate Golf Challenge has forged a link with the best-known golf coach in the world.

David Leadbetter is the man who turned Nick Faldo from a good player into one of the greatest British golfers of all time, and his teaching methods have set the standard to which many aspire but few achieve.

Leadbetter has a client list that is the envy of his fellow teachers. It includes Faldo, Nick Price, David Frost, Bernhard Langer, Ernie Els and many more. Faldo and Leadbetter met in the mid-Eighties, and the Worthing-born Zimbabwean methodically took apart the component parts of Faldo's swing and pieced it back together. The Faldo that emerged went on to win three Open Championships and two Masters titles.

David Leadbetter Golf Academies (DLGA), a network of 16 teaching facilities in a dozen countries, is the official supplier of golf instruction to the Corporate Challenge, and will be supporting the competition throughout the season, as well as being at the national final in Spain in November and some of the regional finals.

The European headquarters of the Academies is at Chart Hills in Kent. Designed by Faldo, the course will host one of the Challenge's regional finals in October. "We're delighted to be involved with the Challenge," Michael Pask, the European manager of DLGA, said. "It is a high-quality event and is just the sort of tournament with which we like to be identified."

Pask's comments were echoed by John Mitchell, managing director of Mitchell Marketing Associates, which conceived the Challenge and continues to run it on behalf of the joint title sponsors, The Times and MeesPierson, the Dutch-owned merchant bank.

The association with DLGA is further testimony to the quality names that are involved with our event," Mitchell said. "The pinnacle of our tournament is always the national final at La Manga, and last year we enjoyed the company of the Tideist long-driving team, Mark Adams and Rick Glynn, who are now officially established as the biggest hitters in world golf."

This year our national finalists will have the opportunity to witness at first hand the methods that have made



The David Leadbetter Golf Academies the best in the business. We will be looking to provide competition possibilities for readers of The Times and the players in the Challenge.

The Academies are staffed by world-class instructors who have received personal coaching by Leadbetter. Selected personally by Leadbetter, they are certified instructors in the "Leadbetter Method", the essential strength of which is that the same guiding principles taught to leading professionals can also be used to help amateur players, whether



Leadbetter coaches Faldo

they be low or high handicappers, or even complete beginners.

Golf is just about the perfect medium for company executives to be with clients or prospective customers — there are few other corporate hospitality exercises that give the opportunity to hold the exclusive attention of the person, with whom one is playing for between four and five hours.

In a little over three years, the Challenge has established itself as a powerful extra tool for company golf day organisers. Its philosophy has always been constantly to provide more value to those entering; its link with DLGA is just another illustration of the point.

Details of how to enter the Challenge can be obtained from the Challenge offices (0171 436 3415).

Mr I. McBain, of 10 Clarendon Road, Boston Spa, Wetherby, West Yorkshire, is the winner of the Challenge launch competition to win a set of Tideist DCI irons.

Hughes banner high po

exam takin with Ander

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معلومات الراج

Defending champion represents Horner's biggest test

By COLIN McQUILLAN

SUZANNE HORNER, the British national champion from Wakefield, faces what may be the most significant match of her long career in the quarter-finals of the Leekes British Open squash championships in Cardiff tomorrow. She meets the defending champion, Michelle Martin, of Australia, and will gain confidence from having defeated her for the first time at the same stage of the Abshot Open last month.

Martin swept past Robyn Cooper, her young compatriot, 9-1, 9-3, 9-3 in just 25 minutes yesterday, while Horner, 33, lost control of the third game against Claire Nich, the South African champion, and might have found herself struggling in a fifth game had she not resisted another attack at the end of the fourth to win 9-4, 9-2, 0-9, 9-7 in just under 40 minutes.

Horner has twice reached the final of the British Open, losing on each occasion to the defending champion — Susan Devoy in 1990 and Martin in 1993. If she can remove the champion earlier in the tournament, perhaps the equation can move her way this year. However, she would need to stay in control for two more rounds against opponents of the calibre of Sarah FitzGerald, Liz Irving and Cassandra Jackman, the second, third and fourth seeds, who are all in contention.

A sharp attack from Nich certainly disconcerted Horner in their third game yesterday, revealing a lack of turning speed which suggested that there may not be many more British Open quarter-final opportunities coming her way. But an uncharacteristic wrong-footing cross-court kill helped Horner to regain service at 6-7 in the fourth game and a forehand service into the nick helped her to reach match point.

Horner is certainly playing the best all-round squash of her career and yesterday's display could presage a glorious finale.

In the men's second round yesterday, Anthony Hill's control of his temperament was severely tested under pressure from Jason Nicolle. The Australian needed to win two tie-breaks against his English opponent to reach the quarter-finals 17-16, 15-10, 17-15. The meeting with Rodney Eyles, his compatriot, could be the cue for fireworks.

Results, page 43

Underdogs turn League into tale of two cities

By CHRISTOPHER IRVINE

THE first meeting tonight between London Broncos and Paris Saint-Germain (PSG) sums up the capital ambition of the Super League, with both sides vying for a brief lead of the new rugby league competition.

There have been several key junctures in the battle to establish a London club as part of the capital's sporting scene since Fulham's flowering in 1980, but none quite as important as the one starting with Paris's visit to The Valley, the home of Charlton Athletic Football Club.

London's win at Halifax Blue Sox in the first round of matches last weekend was a timely one. As it came away from home, against opposition expected to win comfortably, it was arguably more of an eye-opener than PSG's defeat of Sheffield Eagles, on a tide of emotion in Paris.

The victories could not have been scripted better by the Rugby Football League as a launchpad for Super League. Interlopers with questionable credibility removed several of the doubts about their participation overnight. The opportunity to move onwards and upwards is contained in a not unduly taxing first month for either side.

Tony Currie, the London coach, said: "Our levels of fitness and competitiveness at Halifax were excellent, and I'd say we can get 30-40 per cent improvement all round. I'm confident of beating Paris: Bradford and Sheffield are 50-50 shots; Workington is an

80 per cent chance for us, and come the week's break for the Challenge Cup Final, I think you'll see us right up there."

Paris are being somewhat more cautious. "We must not get carried away by our first result. We still have a number of weaknesses in the team and have a great deal of work to do," Tas Baitieri, the PSG manager, said. "The Broncos will be extremely difficult, but our players are determined not to let Paris down."

As the two most delicate blooms in Super League, there is a definite need to nurture both clubs. London's various incarnations and voyages around the suburbs, before putting down roots at The Valley, were partly a result of neglect, but now, under the wing of the wealthy Brisbane Broncos organisation, a southern stronghold for the game is no longer a hopeless ambition.

Winning matches and winning over the London public are not viewed separately by Currie. "I know we get confused with London Monarchs [American football], but I don't care what people are calling us, as long as we're winning," he said. "When you're winning, you're popular."

Currie's arrival in February from the Brisbane parent club, where he was a specialist defensive coach, has ensured the weakest area last season has been tightened up. Of the latest batch of Australians, Gavin Allen's redoubtable presence in the front row is the biggest asset, although Currie



Cutting edge: Darren Shaw, left, Bernard Carroll and Darryl Pitt, of London Broncos, hope to carve their way through the Paris Saint-Germain defence at The Valley tonight

is mindful of a sizeable and mobile Paris pack.

Adam Fogarty returns to the St Helens pack tomorrow for the derby with Wigan at Knowsley Road after a three-month lay-off, and Derek McVey, a recruit from Sydney

Tigers, is called up into the second row. Tommy Martyn is set for a place on the substitutes' bench after a year's absence and a knee reconstruction.

Stuart Cummings, of Widnes, will referee the Silk

Cut Challenge Cup final between Bradford Bulls and St Helens on April 27. Cummings, 35, a physical education teacher, took charge of the opening World Cup match and the final at Wembley last October.

Edwards sets sights on round-the-world record

By EDWARD GORMAN
SAILING CORRESPONDENT



Edwards: ambitious

TRACY EDWARDS, who skipped an all-woman crew in the 1989-90 Whitbread Round the World Race, yesterday announced plans to set a new record for the fastest non-stop circumnavigation of the globe, again with an all-female crew.

The Jules Verne Trophy is held by Sir Robin Knox-Johnston and Sir Peter Blake, who sailed round the world in 74 days, 22 hours and 17

minutes on the 92-foot catamaran, *ENZA New Zealand*, finishing in April 1994.

Edwards, 33, has now bought the Nigei Irens-designed boat herself for around £350,000 after having it surveyed in San Diego, where it has remained since the America's Cup, when it was used as a mascot for the New Zealand campaign. She is having the catamaran shipped to Florida and will then sail it back to Southampton in June for a refit. The boat is in reasonable condition, but will require new

rigging, a new trampoline across the twin hulls, new sails and some interior strengthening work.

Edwards will then start a promotion and training campaign before launching a crack at the record early next year. Edwards will take a total crew of eight, plus a camerawoman. The nucleus is expected to come from the crew of *Maiden* — her old Whitbread boat — with the remainder still to be selected.

This is a high-profile return to sailing for Edwards, who

has had little involvement in yacht racing since her Whitbread campaign. In late 1991, she sustained a serious back injury when she was kicked by a horse. She was in hospital for a week and was unable to walk for six months, but has now fully recovered.

Yesterday, she said she was confident the catamaran could break the existing record. "We will be looking at 73 days," she said. "To go round nonstop with an all-female crew has never been done before and it's the sort of challenge I like."

Derbyshire agree deal with Adams

CHRIS ADAMS has agreed to stay with Derbyshire at least until the end of the 1996 cricket season after reaching a compromise with the county. Adams, 25, a batsman, had originally requested to be released from his contract, which still has three years to run, but, after a winter of negotiations, including discussions with Dean Jones, the new captain, Adams will play this summer. In return, Derbyshire have agreed to review his contract at the end of the season.

Adams said: "I'm pleased that the matter is now resolved, leaving me free to concentrate fully on playing. I am sure the arrival of Dean Jones will be of benefit to everyone at the club, and that certainly includes me. Hopefully, if things work out, then the review at the end of the season will result in me staying with my native county."

Wayne Larkins, 42, the former England batsman who was dismissed by Durham last season, is unlikely to accept an offer to continue his first-class career with Kent. Larkins is committed to playing Minor Counties cricket with Bedfordshire and with Richmond in the Durham League.

Signals celebrate

HOCKEY: Tim Wood, a distinguished forward from the higher realms of Services hockey, led the 11th Signal Regiment to a 4-3 victory over the School of Electrical and Aeronautical Engineering (SEAE) in the Army Cup final at Aldershot yesterday.

The match seemed all over after 23 minutes when the signalmen established a 4-0 lead. Barker scoring twice and James and Duffy adding to the score. SEAE made it 4-2 at half-time through Todd and Perrin. Lallamant further reducing the arrears after an hour. The 42nd Survey Engineer Group won the minor units trophy with a 2-0 victory over the Army Training Regiment, Pirbright.

Pierce relishes return

TENNIS: Mary Pierce, playing in her first tournament in more than a month, beat Gigi Fernandez 6-7, 6-3, 6-4 in the first round of the Family Circle Cup tournament in Hilton Head, South Carolina. Pierce, of France, the No 8 seed, whose world ranking has slipped eight places to No 13 this year, made an inconsistent start against Fernandez, the American ranked No 67, but settled in the second set. Then, as her game became more confident, Fernandez folded. "I feel very motivated," Pierce said. "I'm hitting the ball well, though it will take a tournament or two to get back."

Shield success

CRICKET: South Australia survived a tense final 40 minutes to earn a draw with Western Australia in Adelaide yesterday and win the Sheffield Shield for the thirteenth time. Needing only to draw after finishing at the top of the Shield standings, South Australia were in trouble on the final day after resuming at 57 for two in their second innings, but Peter McIntyre and Shane George dug on grimly, frustrating the Western Australia bowlers as South Australia, set 343 to win outright, reached 208 for nine at the close.

Syed bows to injury

TABLE TENNIS: Matthew Syed, right, the England No 1, has withdrawn from the English Open championships at Kettering because he is suffering from a knee injury. The problem follows the hamstring trouble that has been troubling Syed for several weeks and means that England now has five of its leading players injured for the six-day event.



No charges for Wasps

ICE HOCKEY: Ross Lambert and Jonathan Weaver, the Durham Wasps players, who were arrested on March 9 at the Crowtree Leisure Centre when the play-off match against Humberside Hawks developed into a mass brawl, have been released without charge by Northumbria Police after returning to Southwick police station in Sunderland.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By ROBERT SHEEHAN
BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

I HAVE just been reading a most entertaining book, *Educating Evelyn — Conversations on the Curious Laws of Rubber Bridge*, by Hugh ApSimon (Collins Smythe, £5.95). It is partly a critique of the 1993 rubber bridge laws, partly a highly readable description of how they work when a player commits an irregularity. It would be well worth any keen rubber bridge group having a copy.

What do you think about this auction? South deals:

East's One Spade is a "call out of rotation", as South was the dealer. South's bid of Two Clubs condones the call out of rotation, but what does South's Two Clubs mean? ApSimon demonstrates by use of a conversational device between the players that there is a conflict in the law. Part of law 28 states that South's call of Two Clubs "waives any penalty for the call out of rotation and the auction proceeds as though that opponent had not called at that turn".

In law 29, however, it states: "After a call out of rotation, offender's LHO (left-hand opponent) may... (a) make any legal call; if he chooses to do so, the call out of rotation

stands as if it were legal... and the auction proceeds without penalty."

Thus, in this instance, if South is applying law 28 (b), the auction proceeds as though East had not called; in that case, South's Two Clubs is an opening Two Clubs. However, if South is applying law 29 (a), the auction has started One Spade by East followed by an overall of Two Clubs.

Besides pointing out this inconsistency, ApSimon produces a Solomonian way out of this dilemma. West, if he is feeling altruistic, should ask for a restatement of the auction, as he is entitled to do. Then, if South replies that he opened Two Clubs, it is clear that he is applying law 28 (b), but, if he says that the auction started One Spade by East, Two Clubs by South, then he is applying law 29 (a).

The Portland Club would be well advised to co-opt ApSimon onto their rule-making committee.

For details of *The Times* Midland Private Banking National Bridge challenge, contact the event organisers on 0181-942 9506 or write to: Britannic Building, Beverley Way, New Malden, Surrey KT3 4PH or fax to: 0181-942 9509.

Robert Sheehan writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

EXON
a. A native of Exeter
b. Officer of Yeomen of the Guard
c. An illiterate signature

BERGYLT
a. A Finnish hangover
b. A sea fish
c. A geological fault

MALEBOLGE
a. The eighth circle of Hell
b. A bear belly
c. A Nordic curse

MEACOCK
a. A desexed rooster
b. Timorous
c. A bung in a rowing-boat

Answers on page 46

KEENE on CHESS

By RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Topalov's triumph

Veselin Topalov, the Bulgarian grandmaster, achieved a career best performance when he tied with Garry Kasparov for first prize in the Euwe Memorial tournament in Amsterdam, which finished earlier this week. Topalov finished ahead of several of the world's top players including Anand, Short and Kramnik. He had to win this difficult endgame in the final round in order to keep step with the champion.

White: Veselin Topalov
Black: Jeroen Piket
Amsterdam, April 1996

Ray Lopez

1. d4 e5
2. Nf3 Nc6
3. Bb5 a6
4. Bx6 Nf6
5. O-O Be7
6. Re1 b5
7. Bb3 d5
8. c3 O-O
9. Nf3 Be7
10. Qd2 Re8
11. Nbd2 Bf8
12. c5 Ne7
13. c6 c5
14. Bc2 bxc4
15. dxc5 Nxc5
16. Nxc4 Nd4
17. Nc4 cxd4
18. Bg5 d5
19. Bxf6 Qd6
20. e5 Qh6
21. Ne2 Bc4
22. Re2 Bc2
23. Qc2 Qc2
24. Re2 Rxe6
25. b4 a5
26. Bf3 Rf8
27. Bf3 Nf6
28. Bf3

Diagram of final position

White to move

White to move

White to move

White to move

White to move

White to move

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Alekhine — Reshevsky, Kemer, 1937. With his control of the centre and pressure against e2, Black seems to be doing fine. However, Alekhine soon dispelled this illusion with a fine finish. Can you see it?

Solution on page 46

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm)	Conditions	Run to	Weather (Spm)	Last snow
AUSTRIA					
St Anton	55 280	good powder	art	snow	0 3/4
		(Excellent skiing everywhere; sunshine forecast)			
FRANCE					
Les Arcs	65 205	good heavy	good	snow	2 3/4
		(Fresh snow everywhere; good base skiing at Pabloy)			
Avoriaz	140 180	good powder	fair	cloud	-7 3/4
		(Another 10cm of new snow; good skiing in Avoriaz)			
Chamonix	30 250	good powder	closed	cloud	3 2/4
		(Superb skiing on and off piste; 30cm of fresh powder)			
Flaine	35 350	good powder	fair	snow	-4 3/4
		(Excellent skiing because of new snow)			
ITALY					
Corvina	90 310	good spring	good	fine	-4 3/4
		(Generally very good skiing; some slush at bottom)			
SWITZERLAND					
Arosa	50 50	good varied	fair	snow	-5 3/4
		(Much improved piste conditions with new snow)			
C Montana	5 210	good powder	closed	fog	-3 3/4
		(Cold and foggy; new snow and good skiing above 2,000 metres)			

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L - lower slopes; U - upper; art - artificial.

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THE TIMES
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RACING
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Results
Call 0891 100 123

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49p per min at all other times

FIXTURES

Kick-off 7.30 unless stated
European Cup Winners' Cup
Semi-finals, first legs
Deportivo La Coruña
v Paris Saint-Germain (8.0)
Feyenoord v Rapid Vienna

BEZIER HOMES LEAGUE: Premier division: Rochdale and Darlington v Bury; Rochdale v Darlington; Rochdale v Bury; Rochdale v Darlington

PONTINS CENTRAL LEAGUE: First division: Blackpool v Darlington; Blackpool v Darlington; Blackpool v Darlington

NEWCASTLE v Tottenham (at Gateshead, 8.0)
Notts County v Manchester United (7.0)
SOUTH SHAN LEAGUE OF IRELAND: Premier division: Drogheda v Sligo (7.45)
STURROGH LEAGUE: Premier division: Drogheda v Sligo (7.45)

INTERLEAGUE: English Goodwyn under-18 Trophy: Semi-final replay: Bury v Huddersfield; Bury v Huddersfield

SCHOOLS MATCHES: English Goodwyn under-18 Trophy: Semi-final replay: Bury v Huddersfield; Bury v Huddersfield

RUSSIAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Bury v Huddersfield; Bury v Huddersfield

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RUSSIAN LEAGUE: Premier division: Bury v Huddersfield; Bury v Huddersfield

Free tickets to see the Broncos play tonight

JUST pick up the phone now and you could be watching one of the sporting events of the year: the first London Super League rugby home game. The London Broncos take on Paris Saint-Germain so the capital's kick-off match has an added international flavour.

The Times has 100 pairs of tickets to give away. All you have to do is call the number below and give your name and address. The first 100 callers will get free tickets to the game at the Broncos' ground, Charlton Athletic football club, The Valley, in southeast London.

If you are not lucky enough to win free tickets you can get £5 off by presenting the voucher below.

HOW TO GET YOUR TICKETS

The first 100 readers to call the number below will be allocated a pair of tickets which will be ready for them to collect at the London Broncos' Complimentary Box, Floyd Road, Charlton, SE7 for tonight's game. Kick-off is at 7.30pm.

CALL 0171-481 3388
BETWEEN 9.30AM-3PM TODAY ONLY

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Produce this voucher at the turnstile when paying for one adult ticket. You will then receive £5 off the normal adult price of £10. Valid only for London Broncos v Paris St. Germain on April 4, 1996. One voucher per person. Not to be used in conjunction with any other offer.

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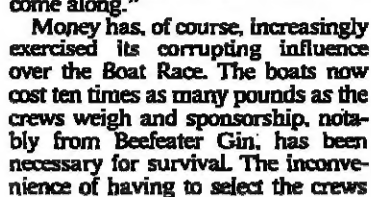
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Where all is not well

This week, Dan Topolski, the guru



Far too much professional sport has abandoned any attempt to field representative home-grown talent, and so lost the most obvious link with its home territory and local supporters. Rag-tag crews of foreign sportsmen are brought in to play for teams purporting to represent cities, towns

JOHN BRYANT



Still, over the winter, he has been stirred to rise consistently early with the rest of the squad. His principal concern is that he will be so nervous on Saturday that he will not revel in the occasion. "I want to relax and enjoy every moment," he said. "I also believe you can perform much better when you are relaxed."

BY MIKE ROSEWELL, ROWING CORRESPONDENT

reserve crew. In the three-minute piece, taken from above Fulham, from a running start, Cambridge on Middlesex finished one length ahead, consistently taking one third of a length in each minute, with the rate steady from 40% to 35%. In the two-minute piece, from a standing start along the Chiswick strait, Cambridge initially struck a rate of 44, never went below 38, and achieved the same

The Lent Lark: Stranger than Fiction. *Radio 4, 8.45pm.*

Being the realistic writer he is—*Priest* for the big screen, *Cracker* for the small one—Jimmy McGovern draws on both for his intensely personal reflections on literal and symbolical crucifixions. Paramount among the elements that he assembles to make his last's death and his wife's raw deal, McGovern's is the fact that his husband's gambling criminal psychologist in *Cracker* and confronts him with the same. The flawed men. Then he adds a fourth, himself. McGovern's screen writing is almost wholly cliché-free. So are these confessions of his on radio.

Peter Daville

RADIO 1	WORLD SERVICE
<p>FM Stereo 4.00pm Charlie Jordan 6.30 Cilla Evans 8.00 Simon Mayo 12.00 Lisa 'Annon' Ince at 12.30-12.45pm Newscast and at 1.15 The Net 2.00 Micky Campbell 4.00 Cilla Evans, Ince 5.30-6.15 Newscast, and at 6.15 The</p>	<p>All times in BST. 5.00pm News 5.30 Europe 6.00 News 6.30 Today 7.00 News 7.30 Spot 8.00 News 8.15 Off the Shelf 8.30 Network UK 9.00 News in German 9.15 Compass 10.00 News 10.05 Business Report 10.15 Spot 6.45.</p>

Net 7.00 Evening Session 9.00 Coins and Maconie's HR Parade 10.00 John Peel Midnight Claire Sturgess, incl at 12.15am The Net

RADIO 2

FM Stereo, 6,000watt Sarah Kennedy
 7:30 Stereo for Thought 7:30s Wally
 8:00 Stereo for Thought 8:00s Wally
 Ken Bruce, and at 10:00 Price of the Hits
 11:30 Jimmy Young 1:30pm Debbie
 Thresher 3:30 5:50 Stewart 5:50 John
 6:00 6:00 6:00 6:00 6:00 6:00 6:00
 David Allen 8:00 Paul Jones 10:00
 Gospel Train 10:30 The Jamsters
 11:00 11:00 11:00 11:00 11:00 11:00
 Douglas Thompson 1:30pm Any Love
 2:00 2:00 2:00 2:00 2:00 2:00 2:00
 3:30 Stereo Report 4:30s Britain 6:30
 News 6:10 World 6:15 Taste Five 6:30
 6:30 6:30 6:30 6:30 6:30 6:30 6:30
 7:30 Assignment 8:00 News 8:00 News
 8:01 Outright 9:25 Words of Faith 9:30
 9:30 9:30 9:30 9:30 9:30 9:30 9:30
 10:15 Stereo 10:30 Medley 11:00
 News 11:30 World 11:45 Sport 12:00
 World 12:10pm Taste Five 12:15
 12:15 12:15 12:15 12:15 12:15 12:15 12:15
 News 1:30 Morning 1:45 Britain 2:00

RADIO 5 LIVE

TALK RADIO	VIRGIN RADIO
6.00am Sandy Werr 7.00 Simon Bates 10.00 Jonathan King 12.00 Tommy Boyd 2.00pm Anna Rieburn 4.00 Scott Chisholm 7.00 Sean Bolger 10.00 James Whaley 1.00-6.00pm Ian Collins	6.00am Russ 'n' Jono 9.00 Richard Siddner 12.00 Graham Dene 4.00pm Nicky Home 7.30 Paul Coyte 10.00 Wurf Forest 2.00-6.00pm Robin Banks

RADIO 3	
6.00pm On Air, Mendelssohn (Sings: Symphony No 12 in G minor; Harrower Band under Roy Goodman); Strauss (Suite, Le Bourgeois gentilhomme; Opheus Concert Orchestra); Rachmaninov (Alekto, geophonic; Philharmonia under Neeme Järvi); Pergolesi (Sings: Raglins in A minor; Gillian Fisher, soprano, with The English Concert)	3.25 The BBC Choroestms, BBC National Orchestra of Wales under Tadaaki Oshio, with Steven Isserlis, cello, Emanuel Ax, piano, Gavrilas Concerto No 2 in B flat; Strauss (Don Quixote) 5.00 The Music Machine, The 1960s - speak and sing The Science of Sound with electroacoustic composer Katherine Norman and Gocric

Robert King), Arseny
(Fantasia on Russian Folk
Songs: Stephen Coombs,
piano, BBC Scottish SO,
under Piero Meloni, 1991)
Respiant (Bailed of the
Gnomes' Philharmonia under
Geoffrey Simon)

9.00 **Melting Colours, Brahms**
(Two Rhapsodies Op 78:
Martha Argerich, piano);
Tchaikovsky (Suite No 3 in G:
USPS Ministry of Culture
Symphony Orchestra under
Gennadi Rozdestvensky)

10.00 **Musical Encounters, Haydn**
(Symphony No 30 in C,
Alfred Brendel, piano)
Week: Dawn Upshaw,
soprano; Stravinsky (No word
from Tom, *Rake's Progress*):
Quilley Schenck (4 in A #);
Whitman (A Mass for
Canterbury); JC Bach
(*Sinlonia* in B flat), Hindemith
(The Four Temperaments)

12.00 **Corner of the Week:**
Schubert

1.00pm **Airs and Affections:**
Operas for Covent Garden
2.00 **Afternoon Toccata**
performs Haydn (Sonata in G
minor), Ravel (Mors),
Babajanjan (Six Pieces);
Haydn (Sonata No 7 in B
flat) etc.

5.15 **In Tune with David Owen**
Norm. Schubert (The Friends
of Salernakna, excerpt);
Haydn (Piano Trio in F flat);
Bach (Gardiner's Salernakna)

7.30 **Northcliffe**
under Heinrich Schiff, cello, with
Robert Plare, clarinet.
Lutoslawski (Graveyard
Shostakovich (Cello Concerto
No 1); Lutoslawski (Dance
Preludes); Haydn (Symphony
No 10 in D)

8.55 **Cultural Baggage:**
Shopping

9.15 **The Formidable Virtuoso**
Herr Elber, John Holloway,
Elizabeth Kenny, three
John Toll, harpsichord/organ
perform three sonatas from
Biber's *Sonatae violino solo*, and
then about the time with
George Palt

10.00 **Music Restored** with Helen
Garrison. The Clerks' Group

10.45 **Night Waves**, Humphrey
Cartwright talks
Whelan about his new play
Divine Right which imagines
the growth of a republican
movement

11.30 **Composer of the Week:**
Rubbra (1)

12.30-1.00pm **Jazz Notes**, Digby
Faberhouse introduces *The
Best of British*, jazz in concert

RADIO 4

<p>5.55am Shopping Forecast (LW only) 6.00 News Briefing and Weather 6.10 Farming Today 6.25 Prayer for the Day 6.30 Today, incl 6.30 Today 7.00, 7.30, 8.00, 8.30 News 8.55, 9.55, 10.55 Weather 7.25, 8.25 Sport 7.45 Thought for the Day 8.40 Yesterday in Parliament 8.55 News</p> <p>9.00 News 9.05 The Moral Maze, Michael Smeek is joined by Peter Stanford, Michael Mansfield QC and Dr David Starkey</p> <p>10.00-10.30 News 10.35 Pantheism (FM only) Remedy by Tessa Quisp (2/4)</p> <p>10.40 Daily Service (LW only) 10.45 The Scepter of Life (LW only) 10.50 Monday's Hour, James Murray meets Joyce Poole who has lived alone for 15 years in the Kynren bush, studying elephants</p> <p>11.30 From Out There Correspondent</p> <p>12.00 Meet You and Yours with Chris Choi</p> <p>12.25pm Looking Forward to the Day with guest Kate Fyfe, Lord St John of Fawley, Andrew Motion and Michael Tregaskis</p> <p>1.00 News 1.05 Weather 1.20 World at Chat 1.40 The Archers (1) 1.55 Shipping Forecast 2.00 News 2.05 The Two Sisters, See Choi's</p> <p>3.00 News 3.05 The Afternoon Shift with Dain Bratton 3.40 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope, Paul Vaughan reports on Dominic Crompton's views on how he has fared in the Bush Theatre in London, and Ted Danson on the new television version of <i>Gulliver's Travels</i></p>	<p>4.45 Short Story, Is There Life after Soft Furnishings? by John Edwards</p> <p>5.00 PM 5.50 Shopping Forecast 5.55 Weather</p> <p>6.00 News 6.05 News 6.30 Darling You Were Marvellous, Sandy Tatchell is joined by Tony Hawks, Toby Low, Michael, Maria and Erlene and Graham Norton</p> <p>7.00 News 7.05 The Archers 7.20 Soundscape, See Choice</p> <p>8.00 The Day God Died in Bakewell chairs an inquest into the rumours of God's death. With Don Cupitt of Emmanuel College, Cambridge; Daphne Hampson of St Andrews University; Keith Ward, Professor of Divinity at Oxford, and writer and broadcaster David White. Stronger than Flinders, See Choice</p> <p>8.45 Does He Take Sugar? Presented by Elizabeth Dove</p> <p>9.30 Kaleidoscope (1) 9.55 Weather</p> <p>10.00 The World Tonight with Martin Lugg</p> <p>10.45 Book at Bedtime: <i>Stalin's Nose</i> by Yuri MacLean. Read by Alistair McGowan (4/10)</p> <p>11.00 George Melly's Owning Up to London Dogs. The second part of the dramatisation of George Melly's autobiography</p> <p>11.30 News 11.35 Destinations (1)</p> <p>12.30 News, incl 12.30am Weather 12.35 Little Bookie David in a Blue Dress, by Walter Mosley (4/10)</p> <p>12.45 Shopping Forecast 1.00 Am World Service</p>
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FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. **RADIO 2.** FM 88.0-90.2. **RADIO 3.** FM 80.2-82.4. **RADIO 4.** FM 82.4-94.8; LW 198; MW 720. **RADIO 5.** LW MW 693. **FOR WORLD SERVICE.** MW 848; LW 162 (12.45-5.55 AM). **CLUBS.** FM 100-102. **VIRGIN RADIO.** 108.8; MW 1197. **215. TALK RADIO.** MW 1053, 1089. *Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, and Susan Thompson.*

Every year hundreds of baby orang-utans are smuggled out of the forests of Borneo and sold as pets. Some, like Di Di who's featured in BBC1's documentary at 5.50pm tomorrow night, are even reared as 'substitute' children.

But a fate that might seem innocuous to us, is a prolonged form of torture to a baby orang-utan who can't wait to get back into the wild and do what comes naturally.

As they develop, they become territorial, aggressive and unmanageable. And that's when they're abandoned. (Orang-utans have been spotted wandering aimlessly among the traffic of Asian cities.)

The World Society for the Protection of Animals gives support to many organizations for work like returning orang-utans to the wild. To do this we are in desperate need of your help.

Then, the only creature comforts these baby orang-utans will have left is the comfort of other orang-utans.

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**World Society for the
 Protection of Animals**

Registered charity no. 252204

Answers from page 44

(b) The ordinary title of the four officers of the Yeomen of the Royal Guard, styled corporals in their commissions, and ranking below the Ensign. Apparently intended to express the pronunciation of the French *exempt*. "The Court gave Moreland [Cromwell's express] two Exons of Ye Guard to conduct him in safety."

BERGYLT
(b) The name of two fishes. The Black Goby, in Shetland and elsewhere, but also the Norwegian haddock or Sea Perch (*Sebastes norvegicus*), an arctic fish, found occasionally on the coasts of Scotland. It may be connected with the Old Norse *berg* a rock. "Central Fish Market: A large supply of fish: bergylt 4d per lb." That was in 1883.

MALEBOLGE
(a) The name given by Dante to his eighth circle in Hell, consisting of ten rock-bound concentric circles, designated "bolge." Used in transferred sense, mainly with allusion either to the pool of fish in the second *bolgia* of the *Divine Comedy*, or to the boiling pitch in the fifth *bolgia* (*Canto xxi*). *Scottman*, 1874: "The charming... feed this detouring malebolge are the newpapers and telegraph offices."

MEACOCK
(b) An effeminate person, a coward or weakling. Of obscure origin, perhaps originally the name of some bird. The suggestion that it is from *meek* is untenable. "For my part I will no more be such a meacock/ To deal with the plumes of a Hyde-Park peacock."

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All is anything but quiet on the home front

According to a survey for last night's *Home Front* (BBC2), 47 per cent of people regard the 1960s as the decade they would most like to have lived in. The inference is that, instead of programmes that sum up the interior designers of the time, the audience would be quite happy watching reruns of Barry Bucknell.

Ah, Barry, where art thou? Bucknell of the slicked-back hair and the thin-tipped smile would not stand at a bench showing us not only how to make a set of shelves out of proper wood but also how to fix them on the wall. By his drills, his saws and his stainless steel screws, so shall we remember him.

In those days, you did-it-yourself in black and white. Armed with Barry's tips, you went to a timber merchant for said shelf and you saved it and planed it to size. You

did not go to B&Q for a pre-sawn piece of laminated chipboard, much less did you pick up an interior designer on the way through the checkout.

Home Front is of the modern school of decoration. Here are three people with between £200 and £12,000 to spend on making their kitchens a joy to slave in. They sound as if they could think for themselves but their intellect has been unplugged from the mains to justify bringing in a professional.

And here is a bathroom in bland white. What this needs, apparently, is another professional with a pile of multicoloured tiles which are placed on the wall in such a way as to suggest that most contemporary of designs, a terrorist device exploded against the wall of a paint factory.

Not that an interior designer is *de rigueur* in these matters. You could always call in... a local


historian. *Home Front* took one of the circa-1900 home of a young couple in Putney, Yorkshire.

He discovered that the grand old fireplace had been gloss-painted. As for the stairs, here was a touch of Victorian skimpiness, by which the banister was made of oak but the stair rails were made from pitched pine to save money. To save money! Those were the days. Try finding a plank of pitched pine in B&Q.

I should not be too harsh on *Home Front*, which takes up in this new series where it left off in the last: the programme is essentially a clearing house for ideas and as such it succeeds. But with negative equity obliging record numbers of people to make the most of what they have, I long for something that tells me how to do it rather than how to find somebody who knows how to do it.

Another programme that re-

REVIEW



Peter Barnard

turned last night has an altogether different purpose. East (BBC2) is an excellent, gutsy series which takes Asia seriously and asks the viewer to concentrate. The effort is rewarded.

The first of the new season brought Mark Tully to the screen, I think for the first time since his acrimonious departure from the staff of the BBC. Tully is a marvellous broadcaster of the old

school, a Bucknell of current affairs, who tells the story and refuses to become part of it.

In India all is turmoil and now there is a fresh manifestation. India's Christians are in a ferment and it has nothing to do with Sikhs or Hindus. The ferment is internal and concerns the caste system.

The Dalits (formerly Untouchables) are the lowest of the Indian castes and Christian Dalits are no better treated for being believers. In the Madras Roman Catholic diocese there have been murders of Dalit priests, rapes of Dalit nuns and violent demonstrations.

This is a classic cultural clash. Upper-caste Christians seem unable to shake off the caste system. Just as village Dalits are forced to live at the bottom of the hill while the upper-caste Christians live at the top (next to the church), so the Dalits are forced to sit at the back of churches and Dalit priests are hounded from office.

Unfortunately, here as elsewhere, the Roman Catholic Church could never be confused with a rapid response unit. But at last the Vatican has started to assist the Dalits. The Vicar-General of the Madras diocese was admirably open in admitting the errors of the past and he has recently had the courage to remove a priest from one parish for failing to show a proper regard for Dalit Christians.

The struggle is not over, however, and the Dalits become increasingly restive. They have a lot to be restive about: whereas 65 per cent of Dalits are Christians, only 3.5 per cent of priests, bishops and others in the hierarchy are Dalits.

Further east, the chirpy Ian Wright went to Uzbekistan and Kirghistan for *Lonely Planet* (Channel 4), which is a travel show and should not be confused with a holiday show.

Uzbekistan and Kirghistan are to Benidorm what John Major is to charisma. "Bring your own toilet paper, bring your own food and be prepared for hell," cries a cheerful traveller at the beginning but, for all that, distant Asia is plainly attractive and even addictive, a region of natural grandeur in which the Concrete Society has yet to run its wire.

Wright wrestled with the locals (and won a live black sheep), crossed plains on a horse and had a fight time with the language barrier on a train: having asked the conductor for a ticket, he was brought a cup of tea. Try that on Railtrack.

The lady in Uzbekistan, a new republic lately released from the Russian shackle, is consistent. There is mutton with rice and mutton with potatoes, but if you like neither rice nor potatoes there was always, er, plain mutton. Or a sheep's eye.

- ### BBC1
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (16094)
 - 6.00am BBC Breakfast News (Ceefax) (47365)
 - 9.00am Breakfast News Extra (Ceefax) (7177384)
 - 9.20am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (s) (7300348)
 - 9.45 Kilroy (s) (1460838)
 - 10.30am Good Morning (s) (303023)
 - 12.00pm News (Ceefax) and weather (8183549)
 - 12.05pm Room for Improvement (s) (841933)
 - 12.30pm Going for Gold (s) (3082297)
 - 1.00pm One O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (40452)
 - 1.30pm Regional News and weather (94734094)
 - 1.40pm Neighbours (Ceefax) (s) (44916758)
 - 2.00pm The Flying Doctors (Ceefax) (s) (8691181)
 - 3.20pm Playdays (s) (1975452)
 - 3.50pm Dinobabies (1962988) 4.10pm The Wizard of Oz (Ceefax) (1272839) 4.35pm (s) (Ceefax) (s) (1272839) 4.50pm The Boot Street Band (1277100) 5.10pm The Alan and Dee Show (Ceefax) (s) (1473704)
 - 5.35pm Neighbours (s) (116758)
 - 6.00pm Six O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (87)
 - 6.30pm Regional News magazines (839)
 - 7.00pm Top of the Pops (Ceefax) (s) (471)
 - 7.30pm EastEnders. Roy has bad news for Barry. Gita settles some overdue business, and Ricky has plans for his future, but will Blanche make his dreams come true? Meanwhile, Michael's attempts to help Allen and Carol go disastrously wrong (Ceefax) (s) (723)
 - 8.00pm Wildlife on One: Meerkats Divided. The meerkats are back! The stars of one of Wildlife on One's most famous programmes, Meerkats United, are back in a real-life drama. Narrated by David Attenborough (Ceefax) (s) (891)
 - 8.30pm Wildlife's Sporting Bloomers. Terry Wogan presents a selection of sporting gallop on film. (s) (Ceefax) (s) (892)
 - 9.00pm One O'Clock News (Ceefax), regional news and weather (963)
 - 9.30pm Absolutely Fabulous. Patsy and Saffron look home; Patsy gets Edna involved with her magazine and Saffron and Edna's mother are victims of a Patsy make-over. With Jennifer Saunders and Joanna Lumley (s) (Ceefax) (s) (5297)
 - 10.00pm Making Babies. Seven-part series begins by focusing on Professor Robert Winston, who runs Britain's busiest IVF clinic at London's Hammersmith Hospital (Ceefax) (s) (228487)
 - 10.55pm The Road to Golgotha. Rob Duncan reflects on the humiliation of Jesus. Athlete Diene Modiah tells of her humbling struggle to clear her name after she was accused of taking performance-enhancing drugs. (s) (30810)
 - 11.10pm FILM: Places in the Heart (1984) with Sally Field, John Malkovich and Danny Glover. A recently widowed cotton farmer battles against the odds to make her cotton plantation a success. Directed by Robert Benton (297433)
 - 1.00am Weather (7004834)

- ### BBC2
- 6.00am Open University: Education and Society (7301084) 6.25pm The History of Maths (7303029) 6.50pm Technology (8997471)
 - 7.15pm See Hear Breakfast News (Ceefax) and signing (4081084) 7.30pm The Record (786742)
 - 7.55pm Christopher Crocodile (s) (1887723)
 - 8.00pm Charlie Chalk (s) (7335391) 8.15pm Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles (s) (Ceefax) (7123297) 8.40pm Blue Peter (s) (Ceefax) (8814181) 9.00pm Mighty Max (s) (7310723) 9.30pm Active (s) (Ceefax) (s) (35487) 10.00pm Playdays (s) (6155655)
 - 10.25pm Star Trek (s) (4450425) 10.50pm The Tick (s) (1328704) 1.10pm Renegade and Hopkirk (Deceased) (s) (8085649)
 - 12.00pm Great Crimes and Trials of the 20th Century: The Scarsdale Killing (50884) 12.30pm Working Lunch (33075)
 - 1.00pm Charlie Chalk (s) (4280384)
 - 1.15pm Pyramids of Peru (s) (857510)
 - 2.10pm The Andrew Neil Show (s) (5372635)
 - 3.00pm News (Ceefax) (7038094)
 - 3.05pm The Natural World: The Comrades of the Kalahari (s) (Ceefax) (s) (7191029)
 - 3.55pm News (Ceefax), regional news and weather (2265568)
 - 4.00pm Today's the Day (s) (452)
 - 4.30pm Ready, Steady, Cook (s) (636)
 - 5.00pm The Oprah Winfrey Show. Oprah's viewers persuade their parents to get with it (Ceefax) (s) (7300003)
 - 5.40pm The Sky at Night: Exploding Stars (s) (Ceefax) (s) (565855)
 - 6.00pm Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (Ceefax) (s) (559149)
 - 6.45pm The O Zone. Featuring Janet Jackson (s) (s) (81282)
 - 7.00pm Waiting for God. News comes through that Bayview is to have a royal visit. With Graham Crowden and Stephanie Cole (s) (Ceefax) (s) (1013)
 - 7.30pm First Night: Radio Renegades (362)
 - NJL 7.30pm Now You're Talking 7.55pm Our Roving Reporter WALES: 7.30pm Dad's Army (365)
 - 8.00pm One Foot in the Past Special: The Baedeker Blitz. Hitler wants to bomb every British building with three stars in the Baedeker tourist guide (s) (7433)
 - 8.30pm Top Gear (Ceefax) (s) (6568)

- ### CHOICE
- Africa Express Channel 4, 8.00pm
 - Nigeria has an image problem and the Government has launched a campaign to counter it. By any standards of democracy, the military dictatorship falls well short. The country has a reputation for fraud. The execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other civil rights activists was condemned throughout the world. Reporter Toyin Fani-Kayode returns to her home country to test the water. In Congo, meanwhile, the prison department has run out of money. Rather than let its prisoners starve, it has decided to so that they can feed themselves. The third report is from Namibia, about a debate on whether tourism should benefit the local community or outside commercial interests. The site of the controversy is the Brandberg, the country's highest mountain.
 - Reputations: Alfred Kinsey BBC2, 9.00pm
 - Clare Beavan's watchable profile is subtitled *The Man Who Invented Modern Sex*. But Kinsey did not invent anything. Rather, he revealed to startled Americans that there was a lot more sexual activity going on than many of them either approved of or were willing publicly to acknowledge. But in exposing, through thousands of exhaustive interviews, such a high incidence of premarital and extra-marital sex, and of practising homosexuality, Kinsey helped to pave the way for the sexual revolution of the 1960s. The film presents an untypical revolutionary. Brought up as a strict Methodist, Kinsey married the first girl he dated and met the outcry that greeted his revelations by playing the detached and objective scientist. He is remembered by his daughters and by Gore Vidal and William Burroughs, who contributed to his survey.
 - Undercover Britain: Taken to the Cleaners Channel 4, 9.00pm
 - Zrinka and Neven, two Sarajevo radio journalists who fled to Britain from the war in Bosnia, go undercover to expose the exploitation of political asylum seekers. New rules introduced in February mean that many are left without state benefit. But if they get work, they often have to settle for the worst. A contract cleaning company gets Zrinka a chambermaid's job at the Heathrow Hilton. She is paid £1.40 an hour. Neven is offered £12 a day to deliver leaflets. Student visas are one way of avoiding deportation while another is a marriage, or a common law relationship, with a British subject. Our investigators discover a college principal prepared to issue a visa and a lawyer (a woman with no more than a law degree) ready to set up a marriage. They charge handsomely for their scams.
 - Making Babies BBC1, 10.00pm
 - Professor Robert Winston, the infertility specialist, may be a leader in his field but he admits that all too often he is trading in disappointment. Yet for couples unable to have children by conventional methods his unit at Hammersmith Hospital in London can offer the last best hope. Joanna Clifton Davies's series follows, in intimate detail, some of Winston's patients through the IVF programme. They know that most treatments fail the first time. The early spotlight is on Tania, who has had four unsuccessful pregnancies, and her partner, a fireman. As her treatment proceeds, their relationship becomes increasingly strained. Tania's 12-year-old son and a younger friend, he in a mate at the fire station. She fears he may leave her if no baby arrives. But nobody, least of all Professor Winston, pretended it would be easy. Peter Waymark

- ### HTV
- 6.00am GMTV (6359100)
 - 9.25pm Win, Lose or Draw (s) (7318365)
 - 9.55pm Regional News (Teletext) (6132704)
 - 10.00pm The Time... the Place (s) (2745297)
 - 10.35pm This Morning (44545297)
 - 12.20pm Regional News (Teletext) (6152433)
 - 12.30pm News and weather (Teletext) (3080894)
 - 12.55pm Shortland Street (s) (3080131) 1.25pm Coronation Street (s) (Teletext) (6220650) 2.00pm Home and Away (Teletext) (s) (5492520) 2.25pm Chain Letters (Teletext) (s) (5494465) 2.50pm Vanessa (Teletext) (s) (4330265)
 - 3.20pm News (Teletext) (7045384)
 - 3.25pm Regional News (Teletext) (7044655)
 - 3.30pm The Riddlers (s) (8180383) 3.40pm Wizards (s) (7998810) 3.50pm Rupert (1971636) 4.15pm Mike and Angelo (2186278) 4.40pm Crazy Cottage (Teletext) (s) (5734029)
 - 5.10pm A Country Practice (s) (6527146)
 - 5.40pm News and weather (Teletext) (552181)
 - 6.00pm Home and Away (s) (Teletext) (s) (785425)
 - 6.25pm HTV News (Teletext) (503891)
 - 7.00pm Emmerdale (Teletext) (s) (5839)

- ### HTV WALES
- As HTV WEST except:
 - 6.25pm-7.00pm Wales Tonight (593991)
 - 7.30pm-8.00pm Wales This Week (591)
 - 10.40pm Strangely Scientific (202755)
 - 11.10pm-11.40pm 3-D (759162)
- ### WESTCOUNTRY
- As HTV WEST except:
 - 12.25pm-12.30pm My Story (6160452)
 - 12.55pm Emmerdale (3080131)
 - 1.25pm-1.55pm Chain Letters (78429549)
 - 1.55pm Home and Away (68529704)
 - 2.25pm Vanessa (54935007)
 - 2.55pm-3.20pm A Country Practice (2361154)
 - 3.10pm-3.40pm Home and Away (6527146)
 - 6.00pm-7.00pm Westcountry Live (38520)
 - 10.40pm Special Report: Daniel Boettcher reports on people who have chosen to live below ground (202755)
 - 11.10pm-11.40pm Tales from the Crypt: Death of Some Salesmen (759162)
- ### CENTRAL
- As HTV WEST except:
 - 12.55pm Home and Away (3080131)
 - 1.25pm Chain Letters. Word game presented by Vince Henderson (79429549)
 - 1.55pm A Country Practice (44817433)
 - 2.20pm Vanessa (54936836)
 - 2.50pm-3.20pm High Road (4330262)
 - 3.10pm-3.40pm Shortland Street (6527146)
 - 6.25pm Central News and Weather (810574)
 - 6.55pm-7.00pm Life Line (870810)
 - 10.40pm Crime Stalker (300100)
 - 11.40pm Max Monroe: Loose Cannon (150452)
 - 3.35pm Customs Classified (225541)
 - 4.20pm Jobfinder (5387292)
 - 5.20pm Asian Eye (1415582)
- ### MERIDIAN
- As HTV WEST except:
 - 12.55pm Chain Letters (3080131)
 - 1.25pm Home and Away (79429549)
 - 1.55pm Shortland Street (44817433)
 - 2.20pm Vanessa (54936836)
 - 2.50pm-3.20pm Surprise Chefs (4330262)
 - 3.10pm Home and Away (6527146)
 - 3.35pm-3.40pm Three Minutes - Crimestoppers (744836)
 - 6.00pm Meridian Tonight (655)
 - 6.30pm-7.00pm Grass Roots (907)
 - 10.40pm Film: Class Action (58712094)
 - 12.40pm Phoenix (458282)
 - 5.00pm Freezone (98650)

- ### SAT
- Starts: 6.35pm-7.00pm Taken to the Cleaners (2346)
 - The Big Breakfast (30075) 8.00pm Saved by the Bell: The New Class (7306520) 9.25pm Gamesmaster (7316907) 9.55pm California Dreams (699094) 10.20pm Mark and Mandy (6151839) 10.50pm Dennis (s) (4330131) 11.05pm The Pink Panther (s) (4233926) 11.30pm Extreme (s) (4570075) 12.25pm Deputy Dawg (6162064) 12.30pm A Box Full of Stories (51471) 1.00pm Methrin (33152) 1.30pm Film: Sink the Bismarck! (31243182) 3.15pm Ricki Lake (408568) 4.00pm Jimmy's (520) 4.30pm The Lonely Planet (704) 5.00pm Pump Up the Volume (3917) 5.30pm Fittern to One (384) 6.00pm Newyddion (45551) 7.15pm The 11th Hour (701758) 8.00pm Clexx (5028) 8.30pm Newyddion (1636) 9.00pm I dot (8407) 10.00pm Annie's Bar (61159) 10.30pm Film: Honeymoon in Vegas (15936907) 12.20am Dispatches (368782)

- ### CHANNEL 4
- 6.35pm Fifteen to One (s) (Teletext) (s) (8978346)
 - 7.00pm The Big Breakfast (30075)
 - 9.00pm Saved by the Bell: The New Class (s) (s) (7306520) 9.25pm Gamesmaster with Dominik Diamond and Patrick Moore (s) (7316907)
 - 9.55pm California Dreams. American comedy drama about an aspiring pop group (s) (699094)
 - 10.20pm Mark and Mandy starring Pam Dawber and Robin Williams (s) (6151839) 10.50pm Dennis (s) (4330131) 11.05pm The Pink Panther (s) (4233926) 11.30pm Extreme (s) (4570075) 12.25pm Deputy Dawg (6162064) 12.30pm A Box Full of Stories (51471) 1.00pm Methrin (33152) 1.30pm Film: Sink the Bismarck! (31243182) 3.15pm Ricki Lake (408568) 4.00pm Jimmy's (520) 4.30pm The Lonely Planet (704) 5.00pm Pump Up the Volume (3917) 5.30pm Fittern to One (384) 6.00pm Newyddion (45551) 7.15pm The 11th Hour (701758) 8.00pm Clexx (5028) 8.30pm Newyddion (1636) 9.00pm I dot (8407) 10.00pm Annie's Bar (61159) 10.30pm Film: Honeymoon in Vegas (15936907) 12.20am Dispatches (368782)



Ian Dury turns storyteller (1.30pm)

- 1.30pm Box Full of Stories. Ian Dury reads The Lucky Weaver, a tale from India. (Teletext) (s) (68542655)
- 1.55pm Making Money. A comedy short from New Zealand (4482472)
- 2.15pm FILM: The Night My Number Came Up (1955, b/w) with Michael Redgrave. A thriller about a man whose terrifying dreams about a flight to Japan begin to come true. Directed by Leslie Norman (Teletext) (826100)
- 4.00pm Jimmy's. Another visit to St James's Hospital, Leeds (s) (Teletext) (s) (520)
- 4.30pm Fifteen to One (Teletext) (s) (704)
- 5.00pm Ricki Lake. The guests are given a make-over for less than \$30 (Teletext) (s) (6858905)
- 5.45pm Terryloves (833588)
- 6.00pm NBA 24/7. Basketball action (297)
- 6.30pm Ripstern: Girl Talk (s) (Teletext) (s) (549)
- 7.00pm Channel 4 News (Teletext) (478432)
- 7.50pm The Slot (627075)
- 8.00pm FILM: Africa Express (Teletext) (s) (1636)
- 9.00pm Undercover Britain: Taken to the Cleaners (2346)
- 9.30pm Annie's Bar. The last episode of the Parliamentary drama serial (Teletext) (s) (48907)
- 10.00pm NYPD Blue. New York police drama series (Teletext) (s) (148297)
- 10.55pm Whose Line is it Anyway? Improvised comedy. With Clive Anderson and Tony Slattery (s) (Teletext) (s) (604100)
- 11.30pm Get Up, Stand Up. Comedy from Malcolm Frederick, Chris Tummings and Angie Le Mar (s) (Teletext) (s) (22556)
- 12.00pm Dispatches (s) (Teletext) (368782)
- 12.50pm FILM: Playing by Rules (1960) with Vanessa Redgrave. Television film about an all-woman orchestra formed by the Nazis in the Auschwitz concentration camp. Directed by Daniel Mann (98821476). Ends at 3.25am

- ### SKY ONE
- 7.00am Underdog (63181) 9.00pm Press Your Luck (897835) 9.30pm Love Connection (690894) 9.55pm Quizz (209400) 10.00pm Jeopardy! (200394) 11.10pm Sally Jessy Raphael (610302) 12.00pm Beecy (60394) 1.00am Home (s) (78784) 2.00pm Cinema (47691) 3.00pm Court TV (1270) 3.30pm News (s) (528752) 4.15pm In the Line of Duty (12891) 5.30pm Star Trek (s) (6500) 6.00pm The Simpsons (5549) 6.30pm Jeopardy! (6025) 7.00pm LPT (687) 7.30pm M*A*S*H (s) (6015) 8.00pm Through the Looking Glass (6015) 8.30pm Action (4742) 9.00pm The Commish (28723) 10.00pm Star Trek: The Next Generation (28610) 11.00pm Melrose Place (76071) 12.00pm Life (674483) 12.45am The Trials of Rosie O'Neill (277368) 1.30am Anything But Love (88018) 2.00pm The Mx (64289)
- ### SKY NEWS
- News on the hour
 - 9.00am Beyond 2000 (58289) 10.30am Nightline (67589) 1.30pm CBS News Part 1 (26013) 2.30pm CBS News (14807) 5.00pm Beyond 2000 (1507) 6.00pm Sportsline (60394) 7.00pm Sportsline (60394) 8.00pm Sportsline (60394) 9.00pm Sportsline (60394) 10.00pm Sportsline (60394) 11.00pm Sportsline (60394) 12.00pm Sportsline (60394) 1.00am Sportsline (60394) 2.00pm Sportsline (60394) 3.00pm Sportsline (60394) 4.00pm Sportsline (60394) 5.00pm Sportsline (60394) 6.00pm Sportsline (60394) 7.00pm Sportsline (60394) 8.00pm Sportsline (60394) 9.00pm Sportsline (60394) 10.00pm Sportsline (60394) 11.00pm Sportsline (60394) 12.00pm Sportsline (60394) 1.00am Sportsline (60394) 2.00pm Sportsline (60394) 3.00pm Sportsline (60394) 4.00pm Sportsline (60394) 5.00pm Sportsline (60394) 6.00pm Sportsline (60394) 7.00pm Sportsline (60394) 8.00pm Sportsline (60394) 9.00pm Sportsline (60394) 10.00pm Sportsline (60394) 11.00pm Sportsline (60394) 12.00pm Sportsline (60394) 1.00am Sportsline (60394) 2.00pm Sportsline 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Gooch joins list of candidates

Selector's job wrong one for Botham

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

IAN BOTHAM has always played the role of the people's hero. There were times, in his pomp, when nobody did it better. But to believe, as some influential voices have now advertised they do, that his input as a selector might resurrect the fortunes of the England cricket team is to both misinterpret the character of the man and to underestimate the nature of the job.

Botham will officially be confirmed today as a contender for one of two vacancies on the selection panel chaired by Raymond Illingworth. At least five other names, among them Graham Gooch, at the behest of Essex, his county — have been proposed and the Test and County Cricket Board expected more before the deadline at midnight last night.

A postal ballot, conducted among the 18 first-class counties, will decide the issue and an announcement is planned for the end of next week.

It will be the most competitive contest for selection vacancies in years, reflecting the turbulent times in the English game and the growing rebellion against established practices. Yesterday, however, one name was dominating the debate, testimony to the enduring perception that a man who could beat the Australians single-handed must be capable of planning so that others may beat them again.

It does not work that way.

Botham was a staggeringly fine cricketer, the most exciting I have seen, but his game was based entirely on instinct, self-belief and God-given talent. It owed little to preparation and planning and, as was evidenced by his thwarted flirtations with captaincy, nothing to an empathy with the needs of others. Botham believed that everyone should play the game his way and, of course, very few could begin to do so. So, watching others play cricket bored him.

None of this is much of a recommendation for a role, under Illingworth, that would

Sri Lanka beaten 43

involve Botham in spending five or six days a week watching county cricket and a good deal of additional hours devoted to the "homework" of preparing reports on individual players. He would, by precedent, do all this unsalaried and, in addition, could not expect to continue the newspaper and television work in which he is expected to critically analyse all aspects of the England team.

Perhaps he has not thought it through just yet. Certainly, that was the impression given by his simplistic assessment of the job as "a case of four or five guys sitting around a table the week before a game and throwing a few ideas around".

Yesterday, however, Botham and his backers were making brave noises.

Botham revealed that his tax-exile in Alderney is about to end, thus lifting any restriction on the amount of days he can spend in England. He also said of his nomination: "I have never been more serious about anything in my life. I doubt if anyone cares more passionately about England than me."

I could not dispute that. Indeed, I have felt for some while that Botham should have some specific role with the England team, perhaps helping regularly with the mental approach of the players.

He would be in his element there, and the "drive and enthusiasm" championed by his proposer, the Derbyshire chairman, Mike Horton, would be properly channelled.

But I have also become convinced that to talk of him as a Messianic figure in management or selection is shallow and nonsensical. There may, superficially, seem something heroic about him joining what he has variously called "the Sanatogen set" and "the gin-soaked old dodgers", in search of a better future for England. But all logic cries that it is the wrong job for him.

Oddly, although he has publicly and consistently ridiculed Illingworth, personality clashes should not be the major disqualifier. The climate is such that a cosy panel — the type, involving his contemporaries, Fred Titmus and Brian Bolus, that Illingworth would prefer — is to be avoided at all costs.

Illingworth may not feel that a current player is appropriate, yet there is much to be said for Derbyshire's second nomination, of their own former captain, Kim Barnett, and certainly for the inclusion of Gooch. This pair, knowledgeable, modern men of cricket, would, with the new coach David Lloyd, make up a most progressive panel, one based on logic rather than legend.

England 'have the players to succeed'

GRAHAM GOOCH, the former England cricket captain, responded characteristically to his nomination by his county, Essex, to stand as a selector. "I would very much like to be involved," he said. "My heart and soul was with England when I played and was captain and, if I thought my views and my experience could help, then I wouldn't mind being involved."

"I don't think we [England] can say we have been playing very well lately. We have talented cricketers, but there is room for improvement. I don't put the blame on Raymond Illingworth and Mike Atherton. I think the players, collectively, have to take responsibility."

"I don't think everything is bad with English cricket. We have talent and we can beat people, although there is a lot of work to do."

Peter Edwards, the Essex secretary, said: "Our committee has thought long and hard before putting Graham forward but we feel he has a lot to offer, having played 113 Tests, 34 of them as captain, and because he is someone so obviously close to the game."

Ian Botham said he was "thrilled" to be asked. "I would love to serve on the selection panel because the big challenge now is to find a team and to make it turn England into a world power again," he said.

"I know some people have doubted my commitment, and thought I was pulling a few legs, but I doubt if anyone cares more passionately about England than me — that would be impossible."



Cambridge University get ready to sharpen up their preparation for the Boat Race on Saturday with a practice race against Goldie, their second-string crew, yesterday. Oxford opted for no more than a quiet paddle. Boat Race build-up, page 46

Brolin handed new reason to leave Leeds

By DAVID MADDOCK

THE argument in favour of Tomas Brolin leaving Leeds United, the club he joined in November for £4.5 million, has long appeared a strong one. Now it has become compelling.

Brolin was warned last night that his place in the Sweden side was in danger if he did not quickly exorcise himself from what has become an almost farcical situation at Elland Road. It is a message not to be taken lightly, as it was offered by Tommy Svensson, the Sweden manager.

Brolin performs a pivotal role for his country. With Leeds, however, he is as far away as ever from securing a first-team place, and relations

with Howard Wilkinson, the manager, seem to have approached breaking point after an April Fool's Day prank, in which the player joked on Swedish television that he would return home, on loan with Norrköping, until the end of the season.

Now, that fantasy appears to have echoed reality, after Svensson confirmed that he has dropped Brolin from his next international squad, and would not pick him again until he had secured a move from Elland Road. "I think it would be good for Tomas to leave Leeds, because they won't let him play," he said.

"Because he is not playing, I won't be picking him for the next international game against Northern Ireland on April 24. I think he really

needs to be playing regularly for the sake of his international position."

Brolin has confirmed that he will leave when a clause in his contract allows, at the end of the season. There is a small matter of the transfer fee, however, with Leeds intent on

Hughes banned 43
Barcelona's advantage 43

recouping most of their initial outlay. With Brolin struggling for fitness, and given such limited opportunity, that will restrict the number of takers. Parma, his former club, are said to be interested, as are Bayern Munich and Liverpool.

Uwe Rösler, Manchester

City's German forward, has set himself on course for confrontation with Alan Ball, the manager. Rösler was alarmed to read reports that he would have been left out of the side to meet Bolton Wanderers last Saturday, had he not been injured on the eve of the game. The suggestion was that Ball had been unhappy with his performance in the 4-2 defeat at West Ham.

Rösler's response yesterday was to strongly assert his return to fitness — and his claim for a place in the starting line-up for the derby match against Manchester United on Saturday.

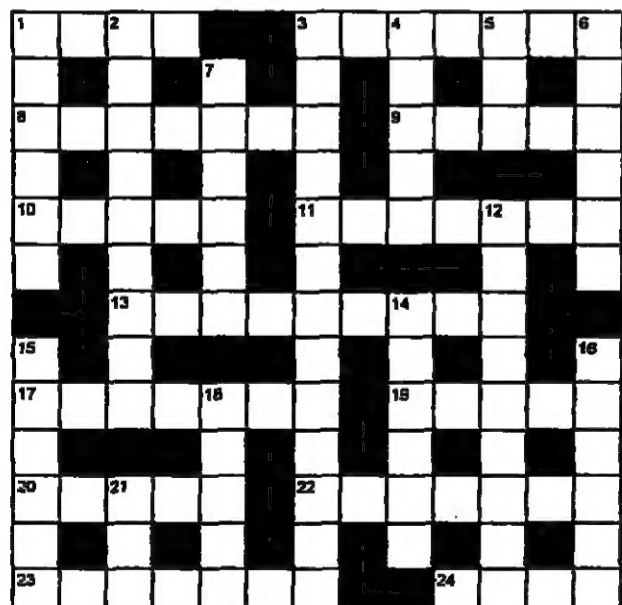
Rösler said: "I spoke with the manager, and he said he didn't say my place was under threat. What is the truth, I don't know. I don't under-

stand all the discussion — for me, I think I will be playing on Saturday. It is true that against West Ham I played a poor game, but before that I played well. My team-mates were happy with me and I am fit to play now."

Ball seems to think otherwise. He had hinted strongly that Rösler would be left out at Bolton, and Niall Quinn, Rösler's replacement, did enough to strengthen such a theory. Ball also has Mikhail Kavelashvili, his new signing from Georgia, available to present an extra selection problem. Rösler has already hinted that he could leave if City are relegated, and being dropped for the most important game of the season is hardly likely to weaken that resolve.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 747 in association with
BRITISH MIDLAND



ACROSS

- 1 Batman's protection (4)
- 2 Mafia man (7)
- 3 Cloth screen (7)
- 4 Humble; modest (5)
- 5 Large entrance-area (5)
- 10 Drooping, limp (7)
- 13 Unscrupulously acquisitive (2,3,4)
- 17 Difficult, tricky (7)
- 19 Horse-race prize; special book illustration (5)
- 20 Sweet, spiced hot pot (5)
- 22 Reversion to primitive type (7)
- 23 Nag (husband) (7)
- 24 Bird; an architect (4)

DOWN

- 1 Calm (one) down (6)
- 2 Foul play (5,4)
- 3 Fanny Price novel (9,4)
- 4 Light wood for models (5)
- 5 Broken flap; pull (3)
- 6 Saudi Arabia (joint) capital (6)
- 7 Vegetable; incentive (6)
- 12 A knight; Maurice —, French singer (9)
- 14 Plead earnestly (6)
- 15 Fat stomach (6)
- 16 Vicar's address (6)
- 18 Gangway (5)
- 21 Weapon for shooting (3)

PRIZES:

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THE RUNNER-UP will receive a return ticket to anywhere on British Midland's domestic network. British Midland offers an extensive range of departure and destination points throughout the UK as well as Europe. As the UK's second largest scheduled service airline and Heathrow's second biggest user, it operates a fleet of 35 aircraft on over 1200 flights per week throughout the UK and Europe. All flights are subject to availability.

Post your entry to Times Two Crossword, PO Box 6886, London E2 8SP to arrive by next Monday. The winners' names and solution will appear on Wednesday.

Name/Address

SOLUTION TO NO 746

ACROSS: 6 Cheviot 7 Lynch 9 Depot 10 Theorem 11 Epoch-making 14 Improvisity 17 Built-in 19 Demur 21 Drink 22 Outcast
DOWN: 1 Leap 2 Virtuoso 3 Stitch 4 Glue 5 Enormity 6 Code 8 Homage 11 Explicit 12 Anecdote 13 Simbad 15 Random 16 Fret 18 Take 20 Moat

In today's puzzle the clue to 12 down should have read Gloucester's son (Leap).

Bruno is not on Lewis's agenda

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

A SECOND meeting with Frank Bruno — if he decides to fight on — would find no place on the agenda of Lennox Lewis, at least according to Lewis's promoter, Panos Eliades said yesterday: "It does not interest me. What interests me is Lewis-Mike Tyson and Lewis-Riddick Bowe. Lennox does not want Bruno. Bruno's a no-win situation — there would be no credit in Lewis fighting him again."

"Look at the way Bruno's treated Lennox, and the way Lennox treated Bruno when he fought him in 1993. The WBC ruled Bruno should fight Lewis, but he turned his back on him. Why should Lewis give Bruno the chance to participate in another championship fight?"

"We want to make sure we get Tyson, as the WBC belt is important. I don't think Bruno deserves another chance. That doesn't make sense, although financially it would obviously be a good fight over here."

Lewis v Bruno for a second time would, in any event, be a long way down the road — and Lewis has the none-too-easy task of getting his hands back on the World Boxing Council title belt first. Meanwhile, Eliades has received a letter from the WBC re-assuring Lewis of a fight for his former title in September.

Amos Saunders, a New Jersey judge, decreed last month that the WBC could not sanction another heavyweight title bout unless Lewis was involved. Lewis makes his next appearance on May 10 against Ray Mercer, a former World Boxing Organisation champion, in New York.

"I just want my title back," Lewis said. "It will make me work harder for May 10 knowing the next fight is mine. I believe the British public are behind me 100 per cent."

"Nothing's for sure and I never put my eggs in one basket. I just want to keep busy, get my title back and show I'm the best heavyweight out there."

Paul Weir has vowed to regain his world light-flyweight crown. Weir faces Jake Matlala, from South Africa, at



Lewis determined

Everton Park Sports Centre in Liverpool on Saturday, April 13. It is a mouthwatering rematch after Weir lost the title in a controversial fight in Glasgow last November. The Scot was cut at the end of the fifth round and the referee, Wiso Fernandez, ruled that he could not fight on, but the WBO upheld Weir's appeal for a second contest as the Puerto Rican referee admitted he had made a mistake.

Under-fire Brittle gets full support of Bishop

BILL BISHOP, the Rugby Football Union president, yesterday re-entered the increasingly bitter conflict between Twickenham and England's top clubs by issuing a solid statement of support for Cliff Brittle, the under-fire executive committee chairman.

Brittle, who assumed the post in January, has been negotiating with the leading clubs about the game's future, but there have been suggestions of a rift between him and those clubs.

However, Bishop last night backed Brittle, saying: "He has my full and unequivocal support. He has a clear mandate from the committee to negotiate and that is what he and his delegation are doing. It has been agreed that these negotiations should take place on a confidential basis and we regret that some have seen fit to involve the media."

Brian Baister, the chairman and treasurer of the National Clubs' Association (NCA), which represent clubs in the third and fourth divisions of the Courage Clubs Championship, said: "The NCA have no difficulty in working under the chairmanship of Cliff, and we will continue to lend him our honest and public support. He has personally initiated a whole series of conciliatory meetings aimed at finding a solution."

Brittle and the RFU negotiating committee have held several meetings with English Professional Rugby Union Clubs, but have yet to solve problems that include whether or not there should be relegation from the first division.

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